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ABSTRACT

A practicum was conducted by a teacher of gifted students in a rural northeastern state in order to develop, implement, and evaluate developmental strategies enhancing dramatics for gifted students attending primary school. Five creative dramatic classroom activity areas were provided for students. Classroom areas were designated for: (1) rhythmic activities; (2) the dramatization of stories; (3) involvement in individual characters; (4) pantomime; and (5) building of a story. Students gathered in three small groups for a period of 2 and one-half hours each week. The groups contained students from first, second, and third grades. The Horst Creative Dramatic Scale, a 6-item, 5-point scale, was devised for use in evaluating each creative skit or story that students invented. Evaluation with the 25-item Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey indicated that all 16 primary gifted students who participated in the practicum showed an increase in their attitude responses towards creative dramatic activities. Related materials, such as a detailed discussion of the children's dramatic activities, are appended. Early in the summer, students in the several groups performed their skits, scenes, or plays for one another. (RH)

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INCORPORATING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE CREATIVE DRAMATIC ABILITY OF PRIMARY GIFTED STUDENTS

BY

ALICE S. HORST

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NOVA UNIVERSITY

INCORPORATING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE CREATIVE DRAMATIC ABILITY OF PRIMARY GIFTED STUDENTS

PRACTICUM II SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

PS 017242

BY

ALICE S. HORST

NOVA UNIVERSITY
CLUSTER 15

February 1988

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Alice S. Horst under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

2-26-88
Date of Final Approval of Report

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ABSTRACT

Incorporating Strategies to Enhance the Creative Dramatic Ability of Primary Gifted Students. Horst, Alice S., 1988: Practicum Report, Nova Unversity Ed. D. Program in Early Childhood Descriptors: Primary Gifted Children/Curriculum/Creative Dramatics/Enrichment/Creativity/Student Motivation/Rhythmic/ Building A Story/Pantomime/Dramatization of Stories

This practicum was designed to help teachers create an atmosphere to enhance creative dramatics for primary gifted students. A review of the literature and the revised curriculum of the school district verified this need. The students were identified as gifted according to board approved guidelines.

The writer provided five creative dramatic activity areas, i.e., rhythmic, dramatization of stories, involvement in individual characters, pantomime and building one's own story. The Horst Creative Dramatic Scale, which consists of six questions with five ratings possible, was used to evaluate each creative skit or story.

All of the 16 primary gifted students who participated in this practicum showed an increase in their attitude responses towards creative dramatic activities on the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey. The average of the possible 25 item responses surveyed increased 38% overall. The accomplished creative dramatic activities were presented for peers, parents and teachers.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Community

This practicum was conducted in a school district located in the northeastern part of a state which is situated in the eastern part of the United States. The district is a 3-hour ride by automobile from the highly urbanized and industrial regions of two major cities. It is comprised of townships and boroughs in two counties. The district covers an area approximately 320 square miles, surrounding a man-made lake in a region which, although not mountainous, is undulating, with elevations ranging from 1,000 to 2,000 feet.

The area is well known for its scenic beauty, man-made resorts and recreational facilities. The efforts of the local travel industries have been directed at changing the tourist trade from a "summer-months" to a "four-seasons" operation to accommodate the ever increasing number of people interested in winter sports. Vacation cottages, family resorts and honeymoon havens provide year round facilities. In addition to attracting vacationers, the area's natural ruggedness lures many hunters and anglers to the area.

At the time of this practicum, the school district operated six elementary schools, one middle and one high school. The first building was opened in 1924 and the last one in 1977. The student enrollment for the entire district has been fairly consistent with less than 2,000 students. However, it must

be noted that the largest enrollment was in the elementary school, which was comprised of approximately 760 students.

Major employers in the two counties are a hospital, several knitting mills, a business forms factory, numerous resorts, private clubs and land developers. The school district is one of the largest employers in the two counties. The per household effective buying income in the two counties is slightly above the national average. The district has recorded continued increases in assessed valuations due to numerous homes constructed by land developers as second homes for residents of metropolitan areas.

The collected district population census from 1970 to 1980 showed a 19.1% increase in population. This increase was primarily composed of retired individuals. The local people refer to these individuals as "snowbirds," as they spend 6 months in this area and the other 6 months in the south. The area has attracted them because the cost of living is lower than in metropolitan areas and the summers are warm (Russell, Rea & Zappala, Inc., 1984).

Writer's Work Setting, Role and Responsibilities

The writer's rural school district implemented gifted education into the curriculum in 1978. This gifted program provided an environment in which the students' individual educational needs were most important and where the opportunity to be challenged was a reality. Generally, gifted students

have several characteristics in common:

1. They grasp and retain knowledge quickly and accurately.
2. They convey ideas effectively.
3. They demonstrate creative and inventive capabilities.
4. They demonstrate skills in abstract thinking.
5. They exhibit perserverance and eagerness to perform difficult tasks.
6. They exhibit originality in ideas.

These characteristics of gifted students were relevant for beginning the screening process. Recommendations for applicants were accepted for potential placement in the enrichment program through the following sources:

1. teacher recommendation,
2. guidance counselor,
3. peer identification,
4. qualified community leaders,
5. demonstrated performance,
6. student interests,
7. parents,
8. portfolio of accomplished works.

Submitted names of potential candidates received from the initial screening process were evaluated by several sources. Pertinent data was compiled and employed as a means to determine if a student was considered exceptional or nonexceptional. These sources are:

1. teacher recommendations,

2. standardized achievement tests,

3. grade average,

4. group intelligence test quotient,

5. Slosson Intelligence Test administered by the guidance counselor,

6. Full Scale Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children administered by a certified public school psychologist,

7. parent questionnaire,

8. student interest inventory.

After this data was gathered, a multidisciplinary team meeting was planned to evaluate an educational program for each individual student, considering the least restrictive environment available. Following this meeting, the student's parents were invited, in a letter, to participate in an Individual Educational Program Plan (IEPP) to develop the plan most suitable for the student. Those students who did not meet the criteria were sent a letter of nonexceptionality.

Identified gifted students were presented opportunities that were above or beyond a normal classroom situation. They received stimulating activities in creative writing, junior great books, problem solving in reading and math, manipulating tans (Chinese puzzles), map history/map legend, tables, graphs and field experiences.

The size of each group was six or less. Classes were often held in the library area where resources were readily available. Each student had an IEPP which reflected his/her

curriculum objectives. This plan was dated and became a part of the student's permanent record. Each year, a new plan was devised for each student, and every 2 years, consideration for continued placement in the gifted program was evaluated by the multidisciplinary team. The team consisted of teachers, counselors, a certified public school psychologist and the supervisor.

The writer has taught in this district for 18 years; the first 8 years were spent in grades 1-3, which center closed in 1977. During the time of this practicum, she was the coordinator and teacher of gifted students. The writer was qualified in her specialty in that she holds a master's degree and administrative certification and is currently pursuing an educational doctorate in early childhood education. The district gifted program has undergone scrutiny by state and intermediate evaluators and has received many commendations. The writer has acted as a consultant to other districts developing their gifted programs.

One of the writer's primary responsibilities was to teach creative activities to identified primary gifted students. The students gathered in 3 small groups for a period of 2½ hours a week. The groups were multigraded with students in grades 1, 2 and 3. Due to the fact that gifted students usually comprehend content rapidly and need less drill, they were taken from their regularly scheduled classes. Students were not penalized for attending the enrichment class. However, each student endeavored to accomplish the requirements of the missed classes.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Statement

Creative dramatics is an art for children where sharing thoughts and stories are experienced extemporaneously with the guidance of instructional leaders. Unlike drama or children's theater, which is often prepared and presented to an audience, the creative dramatics experience allows the students to create dialogues and actions to express a story, scene or feeling for themselves and their fellow classmates. Many children in primary regular and gifted programs have extremely limited opportunities to participate personally in experiences related to creative dramatics as it is not a part of the curriculum.

Creative dramatics is not new. As far back as the days of the Greeks and the Romans, people acted out their feelings. The development of formal dramatics grew as artists gave expression to their ideas and informal dramatics continued as children pretended as they played. For many years, children were expected to be seen and not heard. Fortunately, children continued to pretend and imitate their parents and mentors over the years.

Early in the 20th century, adults became concerned about the development of children and saw a need for them to express their feelings through legitimate channels. Psychologists such as Moffet (1968) began to study the characteristics of

children and their behaviors. Educators applied this acquired knowledge to help determine an appropriate educational approach and/or method and placement for the development of the whole child, which leads to well integrated citizens in a democratic society. It was at this time that informal dramatics was recognized as an instrumental factor in a child's development. This idea has come into its own as a powerful tool for learning. It is now called creative dramatics.

Documentation of the Problem

Creativity is best illustrated by works of art (poems, music, paintings, dance), scientific inventions and new designs or arrangements. An assumption generally agreed upon by psychologists such as Moffet (1968) doing research was that creativity is a human capacity possessed to some degree by all. Educators also related that students learn more if the approach to their studies is creative (Getzels, 1985). Creative dramatics allows students to experience and express their own ideas and feelings through acting.

In the writer's setting, interest in improving the schools and accountability added numerous concerns for instructional leaders and a superimposed burden on classroom teachers. In the past, district staff leaders required that all elementary students present a play each year for peers and parents. As of September 1985, this requirement was no longer in effect. Before September 1985, there were few special area teachers.

Since then, several special area teachers were added to the staff, including an additional physical education teacher, a librarian and a music teacher. Therefore, the opportunities for children were increased. However, the situation provided the classroom teachers with less time to teach basic requirements in that each primary student was more involved in out-of-classroom activities. Therefore, few plays were presented. For example, each primary student received two 45-minute physical education classes, one 40-minute music class, one 45-minute art class and one 30-minute library class each week. In addition to this, the third graders also had a 30-minute class of flutophone and music theory.

This expansion of the curriculum allowed less time for instruction of the basic subject areas. It made it difficult for classroom teachers to meet the maximum time frame specified by state law for instruction. Therefore, the class play requirement was eliminated (see Appendix A). However, teachers could present a play if they desired.

Due to the expansion of the curriculum in this rural district, many students in the primary regular and gifted programs had limited opportunities to experience creative dramatics. Thus, their main exposure to the fine arts was through television.

Causative Analysis

In the late 1970s, lower Scholastic Appitude Test (SAT)

scores caused educators to return to a back-to-basics approach. This concern prompted states to reevaluate minimum time frames for basic subject areas. In the minds of some educators, however, it urged teachers to return to drill-type teaching methods and placed emphasis on routine and memorization tasks which tend to stifle creativity (Torrance, 1979).

The concern on the part of some educators appeared to be that certain subject areas would be emphasized and that others would be considered "frills." For example, Boyer (1984) feared that people would decide that subjects other than math and science would be considered frills. "Excellence in education is measured not by the SAT but by the mastery of language and by the ability of each student to communicate with care" (Torrance & Shafter, 1986).

Lack of opportunities for primary gifted students to develop their maximum potential could cause negativism and frustration. They need many stimulating experiences to reach their full potential. Creative dramatics allows students to share ideas and clues from others; express themselves through active sensory, social and environmental experiences; and to be encouraged to evaluate their own and others' creative dramatics in order to have a wholesome emotional experience. Allowing peers to critique each other's creative dramatics helps them to perceive various acting styles.

Chambers and Lowry (1975) maintained that creative dramatics, in any form, is a stimulus for growth in oral language.

They said:

> Creative drama, that phenomenon that allows children to create a structured scene built from a storyteller's tale without script or theatrical property, is probably one of the finest techniques available to the teacher to encourage oral language growth. This technique has been employed by successful teachers for many years (p. 74).

The Related Literature

Creative dramatics was experienced by primitive societies as they expressed their joy, fear and sorrow through movement and dance. From their beliefs came many sacred rituals and musical chants. In ancient Greece, religious celebrations culminated in contests which gave birth to dramatic form. During the Middle Ages, the church was instrumental in the rebirth of dramatics as amateurs performed Bible stories and moral tales. In every period of history, significant happenings, (called plays), were interpreted by dramatics. Plays created order. The main characteristic of plays was teamwork, which drew participants closely together as they experienced an idea, tale or happening (Bereiter & Scardamalin, 1982).

The writer's primary gifted students brought a tremendous amount of experience with them to school. It was imperative that the enrichment program provide an environment in which the students' individual educational needs were most important

and where the opportunity to be challenged was a reality. The center of any educative system is communication. Too often, it is a one-way course rather than a circular process, with the teacher and the students all being receivers and senders. In the circular process, the atmosphere for learning becomes exciting as children learn to communicate with the teacher and each other and the teacher learns to communicate with each child individually.

Students need to use language continuously. Linn (1986) characterized the philosophy of Language Patterns as a three dimensional component of human personalilty. They are as follows

> (a) An instrument of communication; (b) an instrument of logical reasoning....Language Patterns recognizes language as the symbolic representation of experience and views experience as falling into the following classifications: (1) basic sensory experience which Piaget considers vital to subsequent cognitive development; (2) social experience involving the interplay of the child and his peers in the group; (3) environmental experience in the community (p. 158).

The translation of these theories into practice was imperative. Too often, constant desk work -- the standard pencil and paper activities -- stifled the excitement that could occur. For the gifted students, it frequently led to disillusionment with school. Enhancing the language arts program through the use of creative dramatics was a positive learning instrument for

teachers of the gifted, as it was congruent with the needs and the characteristics of primary gifted students.

Tucker (1971), in a study using creative dramatics in primary reading readiness, showed "that creative dramatics had an influence on developing the verbal skills of reading readiness beyond that of maturation and normal schooling. Specific abilities such as listening and vocabulary were developed" (p. 58).

Crossup (1966) indicated that creative dramatics experiences were worthy activities that appealed to gifted students. These activities provided the opportunity for students to be anything or anyone. Gifted students' thinking might be stifled by mediocre activity. If students were provided the opportunity to discover dramatics creatively, they would enter into daring experiences in reality. The delight of a story coming alive enabled students to develop socially. It recognized that each student was himself a maker, a doer and a creator. It also provided the student an opportunity to develop wholesome, emotional, strong inner feelings which were so often curbed in everyday living. These feelings were brought out into the open and guided into healthy channels as the students played strong and vigorous characters in the creative dramatics classroom.

Moffet (1968) indicated that "acting out" promoted expression of all kinds -- movement and speech harmonizing and reinforcing each other in the activity. It limbered body,

mind and tongue. It made peer socialization a learning experience not usually possible outside of the classroom. It developed those characteristics for the process of discussion such as attending, responding, interacting and taking turns speaking.

Pierini (1971) indicated that creative dramatics led to an appreciation of other values: beauty, joy, creativity and imagination, which were as necessary and satisfying as having enough to eat. It set into action people's inner resources, which were their greatest assets in building a beautiful world for themselves and for those around them. The emphasis was on the process rather than the product, which distinguishes creative dramatics from children's theater.

In groups of students, some were timid or introspective and needed to be strengthened. Ward (1957) cited that others were aggressively outgoing and needed to learn to look more deeply inside themselves. Some moved awkwardly, some spoke poorly; and, in many cases, the creative dramatics experience was the very process that freed the students to be other than their usual selves. It was, therefore, as the definition accepted by the Children's Theatre Association of America (1977) indicated: "Creative dramatics is an improvisational nonexhibitional process-centered form of dramatics in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences." The creative dramatics class was the place where personality unfolded and blossomed in a

natural way for students. The process rather than the product was most important, and Crossup (1966) stated that a rich and varied program of informal dramatics and dramatizations is more valuable than putting on plays.

Getzels (1985) related that educators should turn their attention to teaching creatively. A 20-year study of 31 artists as students and as professionals revealed that skills in finding and formulating problems were significantly related to creative achievement. Cohen (1981) established a model performing arts program for gifted elementary students in Philadelphia which provided these children with valuable first-hand backstage experience with music, dance and dramatics.

A study by Meeker (1979) indicated that creative dramatics enhanced problem solving and creativity for primary gifted students. Meeker studied 91 gifted students in the primary grades compared with 78 matched students. The findings showed significantly higher scores on the posttest instruments depicting figural, semantic and symbolic creativity. These studies indicated that creative dramatics enhanced problem solving and creativity for the primary gifted students. Also, studies by Severeide and Sugawara (1985) maintained that creative problem solving scores increased after 53 primary grade gifted students experienced imaginative puppetry classes and creative problem solving classes.

Schempp and Cheffers (1982) investigated the influence of fundamental movement skills which encouraged students to

share in decision making regarding the tasks to be performed, their level and duration. The results showed that students increased positive attitudes toward human movement, enhancing creative thinking and self-concept.

The evidence in the literature added support and validity to the importance of creative dramatics for primary gifted students. The literature suggested that creative dramatics related new experiences to old ones, increasing the range of associations of familiar words and objects. Dramatization provided students with the opportunity to explore their feelings about the world in which they live. They participated in active sensory, social and environmental creative dramatics, better preparing them for today's world and the complex problems which life offers.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of General Goals

The following goals were projected for this practicum: to develop, implement and evaluate developmental strategies of creative dramatics. This practicum was designed to involve 16 primary grade students who were identified as academically gifted. These students were identified as gifted according to the guidelines accepted by the school board of the writer's district.

Behavioral Expectations

The specific behavioral objectives were to develop, implement and evaluate developmental strategies of creative dramatics for primary gifted students as follows:

1. Students were to grow in creative and aesthetic development and gain a knowledge of themselves.

2. Students were to further peer socialization and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

3. Students were to improve the skills necessary for discussion such as responding, attending to the task, interacting and taking turns.

4. Students were to examine, exercise and channel their emotions.

5. Students were to demonstrate the ability to participate in creative dramatics.

Standards of Performance

When presented with a pre and postattitude survey regarding feelings towards creative dramatics, students would indicate improvement in positive feelings towards this experience. An increase of 30% in the posttest scores were to be the expected criterion of success. The following standards of performance would measure the behavioral expectations.

1. Students were to gain a knowledge of self by developing creatively and understanding aesthetically by circling "(4) most of the time" or "(5) always" on the "Identity of Self" section of the Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix B).

2. Students were to further peer socialization and the ability to work cooperatively with others by circling "(4) most of the time" or "(5) always" on the "Socialization" section of the Horst Attitude Survey.

3. Students were to improve skills necessary for discussion such as responding, attending to the task, interacting and taking turns by circling "(4) most of the time" or "(5) always" on the "Emotional" section of the Horst Attitude Survey.

4. Students were to examine, exercise and channel emotions appropriately by circling "(4) most of the time" or "(5) always" on the "Intellectual" section of the Horst Attitude Survey.

5. Students were to demonstrate the ability to participate in creative dramatics successfully by circling "(4) most of the time" or "(5) always" on the "Environmental" section of the Horst Attitude Survey.

Assessment Instruments

The Horst Attitude Survey consists of 25 questions regarding feelings toward the development of the whole child -- socially, emotionally, intellectually and environmentally. The students were to respond to each question based on a 5-point scale indicating "(1) never," "(2) seldom," "(3) sometimes," "(4) most of the time," "(5) always."

The Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix C) consists of six areas of performance which were to be completed by members of the audience whether they were parents, teachers or peers. This 5-point scale indicated "(1) no opinion," "(2) poor," "(3) fair," "(4) good," "(5) excellent."

A log recording unexpected results, surprises and additional elements would indicate the way the students responded to the creative dramatics activities.

Plans for Analyzing Results

The specific objective of this creative dramatics practicum was to develop, implement and evaluate developmental strategies enhancing dramatics for primary gifted students. The results were to be presented through:

1. five tables depicting each of the behavioral expectations on the pre and postquestions specified for the behavioral expectation on the Horst Attitude Survey;

2. the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale depicting in table form the three performances given.

A summary of the log was to be included in the appendix, particularly recording surprises and deviations from the implementation plans as noted in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

Several authors have contributed ideas for encouraging students to participate in creative dramatics. Dempsey (1985) suggested that research had indicated that creative dramatics enhances learning and improves student skills in finding and formulating problems. Segal and Adcock (1981) discussed typical aspects of imaginative play for students at specific age levels from 2 to 4. They presented techniques to encourage and enhance student's imaginative play at home and in the preschool setting. Shaffer (1981) also provided for a number of activities to encourage dramatic play in young students.

Woods and Trithart (1970) conducted a creative dramatics program once a week for 10 weeks during the school year with the option by the students and the parents to renew for two additional 10-week sessions. With 40 minutes spent in dramatic play and story dramatization, 15 minutes were alloted for a visit to the picture book section of the library with the librarian talking with the students. From the display of books, students made two choices for checkout. Thirteen activities were presented to use with students in developing creative dramatics. Woods (1970) offered another good source which included 12 ideas for developing creative dramatics.

Evaluation checklists for creative dramatics were offered by Petty, Petty and Becking (1976). They presented a checklist

for the actors and a checklist for the audience. In addition, they suggested that dramatization be built around Mother Goose rhymes; simple, brief stories of a repetitious nature, but with lots of action; and historical events. They suggested that, regardless of the situation used, the students develop mental stages and interests. These would need to be considered in selecting materials for creative dramatics.

One of the best sources for simple creative dramatics activities was presented by Davis, Helfer and Shapiro (1973). They offered short exercises in which students used ideas which developed from the initial activities. Students were flexible to move on their own and to enlarge upon them.

Little (1972) offered a number of ideas to be used with students in pantomime. They included activities that could easily be identified with English. Such pantomime games included antonyms, synonyms and homonyms. Other activities involved building a mood, using voice and different kinds of sounds.

Petty et al. (1976) described the role of pantomime as a tool important to helping students develop the ability to communicate orally. They emphasized that pantomime is expressive -- it tells something. The familiar is easy for students to show through pantomime; the entire body is used. Pantomime activities develop the sense of awareness. They suggested that a full-length mirror gives students an opportunity to practice their pantomime and try out variations before an audience of only one.

Generally, the literature presented activities that could be used, rather than specific programs involving creative dramatics. Only one source (Woods & Trithart, 1970) presented a systematic program over a period of time. While some of the ideas were used by the writer, the program was for preschool students and did not meet the age level of the students in the writer's practicum. Therefore, some of the activities were not appropriate. In addition, the time period for this practicum was much longer than the time period used in the Woods and Trithart program.

Many of the ideas presented by Segal and Adcock (1981) and Shaffer (1981) were adapted to the writer's setting. However again these activities were developed for preschool students. The evaluation checklist described by Petty et al. (1976) was useful. These ideas were incorporated into the Horst Attitude Survey and the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale. This practicum used an eclectic approach and ideas from all of the aforementioned sources were incorporated.

Description of Selected Solution

The solution to the problem of children in primary regular/ gifted programs having extremely limited opportunities to participate personally in experiences related to creative dramatics was based on a number of methods and strategies described in earlier sections of this study. The writer provided five creative dramatics activity areas, i.e. rhythmic, pantomime,

involvement in individual characters, dramatization of stories and building one's own story. The exercises involved in each of the creative dramatics activities were selected from the sources presented and adapted to meet the needs of the students involved.

The first area that was presented involved rhythmic activities. The following activities represented the kind of exercises that were used:

1. Waking up the body (Davis et al., 1973),
2. Invisible balls (Davis et al., 1973),
3. Swinging (Davis et al., 1973),
4. Leaves are changing colors (Woods, 1970),
5. Maple wings (Woods, 1970),
6. The caterpillar's secret (Woods, 1970),
7. Mother Goose rhymes (Petty et al., 1976),
8. Responding to tempo and types of music (Holman et al., 1985),
9. Inflated balloon (Holman et al., 1985),
10. Magic scarf (Holman & Gitomer et al., 1985).

Additional rhythmic activities were presented such as falling leaves, the storm and others at the discretion of the writer (Le Sorti, 1981).

The second area utilized creative body movement and expression through the medium of pantomime. Students were encouraged to imitate and use their entire bodies to portray activities such as a perking coffee pot, a fireman climbing

a ladder, a man who just sat on a tack, a dish of Jello, etc. The following specific activities were used:

1. Voice sounds (Little, 1972),
2. Build a mood (Little, 1972),
3. Actions and attitudes (Little, 1972),
4. Magic net (Torrance, 1979),
5. Pantomiming spelling words (Woods, 1962).

In addition, five folk tales were selected by the writer. They were selected, taking into consideration the different ways pantomime could be used to contribute to the story. For example, a story was selected so that students pantomimed their own story endings and a story was chosen that portrayed a lot of action so that students portrayed the various parts of the story (McIntyre, 1963).

The third area involved individual character roles. This area involved the other two areas mentioned previously, i.e., rhythmic activity and pantomime. In addition, when appropriate, students used their voices to express and characterize the individual character dramatized. Stories or significant characters or objects involved in well known stories were selected for dramatization. For example, a student might portray the fireman in the "Little Fireman", or a character in the "Washing Machine Story", both by Margaret Wise Brown or the "Dancing Bear" (Woods, 1970). At least 20 or more characters from more traditional stories were used.

The fourth area was the dramatization of stories. Selected

scenes from folk tales and legends were extrapolated. At least 10 different folk tales and/or legends were used. In this area, students were encouraged to take the role of an animal, a descriptive person, or an object (Kelly, 1976). For example, a student might portray the fireman in the "Little Fireman" or a character in the "Washington Machine Story," both by Margaret Wise Brown or the "Dancing Bear" by Martha Ifferts (Woods, 1970).

The final area entailed building a story. The students used all of their previous experiences in creative dramatics to develop and dramatize their stories. The final dramatizations were presented in a program for parents and students entitled "Creative Dramatics Summer Festival."

Calendar Plan of Implementation

The calendar plan of implementation for this practicum is included in the appendix (see Appendix E). This calendar plan, as specified, incorporated approximately one creative dramatics activity per week over the duration of the practicum.

Report of Action Taken

After administering the Pre-Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix B), the students were presented relevant background information regarding the history of creative dramatics over the years. A discussion of student expectations was informal and spontaneous. The students were instructed to relax on the floor and practice breathing exercises. The writer was

part of all beginning activites to promote confidence and sincerity of the experiences. The students were instructed to rest their hands on their stomachs in order to experience the rise and fall of their muscles. The writer counted slowly out loud to promote inhaling and exhaling with a given rhythm. This activity was used to prepare the students for further rhythmic activities.

In the next session, the students repeated the breathing exercise, which was followed immediately by waking up the body (Davis et al., 1973). The students rested on the floor, pretending they were asleep. The writer played soft, quiet music as the students began to wake up the various parts of their bodies, one at a time, until they were on their feet. She then repeated the exercise, using a buzzer unexpectedly. This activity was followed by having the students express how they felt and share if the buzzer made a difference in how their bodies reacted.

As the students were standing in a circle, the writer created an invisible ball and described its form to a student (Davis et al., 1973). Each student continued passing, tossing or throwing the invisible ball while striving to make it into a different object.

After the students discovered all the types of invisible balls they could create, they were instructed to use their imagination to discover all the ways their bodies could be made to swing -- head, arms, legs, waist, etc. (Davis et al.,

1973). At this time, the students were instructed to gather in a circle and share the previous experiences with each other. The writer reinforced that all responses were correct and highlighted the unexpected and creative for the students.

In the next session, the students were eager to experience leaves that change color after listening to the following poem: "Leaves are changing colors these days -- to red, yellow and brown; They're waving 'good-bye' to favorite friends, As they flutter, flutter down" (Woods, 1970). The students imagined they had on a colored coat. They discussed their chosen color and how it made them feel. The writer played descending notes on the piano to imitate falling leaves as each student was blown by the wind to the child's imaginary destination.

The students spontaneously progressed to maple wings as each one was given a maple seed to investigate while the following poem was recited:

The wind is moving 'round the bend
    We're in for a steady blow.
The maple tree wings are loosening their hold
    Preparing to go below - Where?
One might land in a collie's mane;
    Or lie afloat on a stream.
Or peep from a nest in the crook of an elm -
    All partners of Nature's scheme:
Then, warmed by the sun after long winter's rest,
    The hard shell will open wide

A little green ball will unfold two curled up
leaves inside.

Tiny maple trees with sturdy brown stalks
Will pop up here and there.

Soon they will sprout wings of their own -
To sail in the crisp Autumn air (Woods, 1970).

Notes, some ascending and descending variations, were played on the piano and the students pretended to become airborne and travel to their special spot to experience its fate.

This maple seed encountered a caterpillar (Woods, 1970) which was experiencing its life cycle. At this suggestion, the students began to snuggle up for a long sleep with as little movement as possible. The imaginary cold wind blew, the sun began to warm the earth, and the caterpillar began to stretch and struggle to become free. Finally, its wings were strong enough to fly away. The writer caught each in an imaginary net to pursue the students' reactions to the experiences. The students were directed and guided to search for the creative or unusual movements and events in a discussion as they rested in a circle on the floor. They were beginning to discover and recognize the creative dramatics that occurred.

The following week, the students listened and responded to Mother Goose rhymes (Petty et al., 1976). The students, seated in a circle, chose their favorite rhyme for the group to recite chorally. Each student created movements appropriate to depict and enhance each rhyme for the group.

This activity stimulated the students to respond naturally to various tempos and types of music (Holman & Schein et al., 1985). The students displayed how music made them feel through body movement, whether it was fast, slow, smooth or sporadic. They discussed their bodies' impact on visual imagery through movement.

In the remaining rhythmic activity session, the writer challenged the students to discover ways to move their bodies without moving their feet, using a magic scarf (Holman & Gitomer et al., 1985). They were encouraged to move the scarf without moving their feet. After students demonstrated and described their movements, the restriction to refrain their feet from moving was lifted.

At this point, a balloon was inflated and tied tightly with a string. As the balloon was being inflated, the students were instructed to think about ways the balloon might be kept in the air. When the balloon was filled, the writer threw the balloon towards the ceiling while hanging on to the string in order to promote fluency and imagination through physical movement.

To expand the rhythmic activities, the students were directed to physically move to the following given tempo/rhythms: snapping fingers, clapping hands, clicking tongues, flapping arms, a foot beat, nodding heads and bending bodies (Foley, Lud & Power, 1981). To culminate this rhythmic activity area, a drum was used to beat the tempo to enhance the students'

movements. When the beat stopped, the students "froze" in the ugliest positions they could. The student observers or the "statues" themselves verbally described what each one was (Davis et al., 1973). Rhythmic activities were used intermittently for transitional purposes in the subsequent areas.

Creative body movements and expressions through the medium of pantomime was the second area of creative dramatics which the students experienced. The students were encouraged to imitate and use their entire bodies to portray activities such as a perking coffee pot, a fireman climbing a ladder, a man who just sat on a tack, a dish of Jello, etc. (Little, 1972).

To gain flexibility in expressing moods and emotions, the students were directed to form a single line. The writer called out the number 1, which meant for them to express the mood mildly; number 2, to increase the mood to medium strength; and 3, to maximum strenth as the teacher called a mood such as humor, surprise, doubt, delight, shock, curiosity, timidity, dreaminess, etc. (Little, 1972). This activity required that the student be attentive and respond appropriately.

To reinforce the students to use all of their faculties for expressing a particular action or mood (Little, 1972), the students were commanded to bodily respond to the following directives: "say 'Stop!' with your palm," "say 'Yes' with your head," "say 'I bumped the door' with your shoulder," "say 'I don't understand' with your eyes," "say 'I'm waiting' with

your feet," "say 'I hear a songbird' with your ear," "say 'I like this cake' with your tongue," "say 'Come here' with your finger," "say 'I'm running' with your arms," "say 'This potato is hot' with your fingertips," "say 'I'm relaxed' with your chest," and "say 'I'm slipping' with your legs." The group was divided equally to be observers or to be observed. The observers gained practical help by watching and discussing what they perceived. Students were encouraged to practice these past experiences at home in front of a full length mirror and, at the next session, to share with the group any new pantomime gestures they wished.

After the students used the mirror at home and then saw themselves respectively, it was easy for them to attempt mirroring (Foley et al., 1981). This was a technique where one student became the mirrored reflection of another student. It was important to stress that motions be exaggerated and at a pace the follower could accomplish. This activity also required that the student concentrate on the leader and not be distracted by any other one in the group or audience. At times, mirroring was used to gain complete student concentration during the following activities.

To increase emotional awareness, involvement and expression in an assigned or chosen role, the magic net technique was used (Torrance, 1979). To create an atmosphere of magic, a piece of 36 x 72 inch nylon net in various colors was given to each student. The writer instructed the students to choose

a role, a person, an animal, or whatever they wanted to become and physically move according to their selected role. The students critiqued each others' movement suggesting ways they might improve or enhance the role. Next, the students began to create a story in pantomime using the characters with their magic nets. At the conclusion of the story, the students were asked to talk about how the character they pantomimed was really thinking or feeling. The character movements were analyzed and suggestions for depicting or enhancing the role were exchanged.

Self-confidence was promoted in the students by pantomiming letters. The students were challenged to create the letters of the alphabet using no props, only their bodies. The group worked together to gain ideas and attempted the experience at home in front of a mirror. It was a startling discovery for the students to realize that they had to use their bodies in the reverse position, not as if they were reading the letter, but so that others could read their body positions (Silverman, 1983).

At the session a week later, the group exchanged ideas and discoveries they had created. After an agreement was reached by the group where the students could readily read each others' letters, the teacher challenged them to work in small groups to construct words for each other to decipher. Later in the week, arrangements were made for the primary gifted students to share some of the words they had created through pantomime,

subsequently challenging their classmates to figure out the words they created.

To challenge the students to create their own story endings through pantomime, the writer introduced the pantomime walk (Foley et al., 1981). Instructions were given through a story sequence for one student in the group to complete. The story plot placed an imaginary student on the way to school. As the student walked down the street, a $5 bill was discovered in the grass. The students were requested to take turns to pantomime, using a great deal of action to portray what the student did with the money. The students guessed at each pantomime attempt performed. Group discussion followed the exercise to explore whether more endings could be produced for future pantomime.

Upon concluding the pantomime study area, the students were stimulated by using familiar folk tales. The folk tales were used as students appeared to regard themselves as authorities on the subject. This approach reinforced the acquired pantomime skills. The group retold the beginning of Peter and the Wolf (undated) and Cinderella (Dennis & Moldof, 1975), stopping at different scenes in the story for each member of the group to pantomime. This activity inspired the students to respond eagerly.

The third area of this study was intended to involve each of the other two areas previously mentioned, i.e., rhythmic activity and pantomime, as the students explored individual

characters to dramatize. At least 20 characters from more traditional stories were used. At this time of year, the music department teachers were preparing the students to see a performance of the opera, Rumpelstiltskin, staged by a local opera company. The students eagerly attempted each of the character roles before the opera. The little man "Rumpelstiltskin" was the most popular character to dramatize. However, each of the other characters, (the miller's daughter before and after the marriage, the prince and the guards of the palace) also enticed each student. After the opera, group discussions were held as the students critiqued the performance, readily highlighting their favorite parts or suggesting that the character role could have been different. The students chose to redo their favorite individual character roles for the group, eagerly responding to them as an audience.

The librarian had introduced the story Are You My Mother? (Eastman, 1960) in the students' regular classroom. They borrowed the book for creative dramatics class and enjoyed dramatizing the hopeless bird in search of its mother and the objects and animals it encountered on its journey.

Since every story has a universal thought or central theme, students are intrigued into regarding the renewal of the theme as a life experience. The theme of King Midas (Curry & Clippinger, 1972) takes the form of a proverb "The best things in life are free." The writer chose this particular story for creative dramatics as it gives a special meaning to everyday

occurrences. The writer reinforced to the students that there are many possible interpretations for any given story, all of them worth exploring.

The high school fine arts department was preparing the musical Annie for the community. To stimulate attendance at the scheduled performances, several of the cast depicting character roles visited the elementary schools of the district. This live presentation was utilized by the writer to encourage the students to continue their creative dramatics efforts. Individual character roles were acted out creatively for the group.

The legend Jack and the Beanstalk (Jacobs, 1984) was discussed with the students, asking them what would have happened to Jack if his mother had really sent him to sell the cow. Some of the questions considered by the students were: would he have been willing to go; would he have talked to strangers; and would he have been convinced that beans would be alright to take home to his mother? Following the group discussion, the students created the character roles of Jack, his mother and the stranger, taking into consideration what really might have happened in real life.

The exploration of these characters easily led to the individual characterization of the Giant, the harp, the golden goose and the housekeeper. The fairy tale character, Jack, turned into a today real-life boy displaying the modern day world. A great deal of interaction occurred, questioning

authority or the parental request. The students eagerly and responsively engaged in long debates and displayed reasoning that each of the character roles could utilize. Jack and the Beanstalk was an excellent story for the students to combine their previous experience areas, i.e., rhythmic and pantomime.

The fourth study area that the students experienced was the dramatization of stories, selected scenes from folk tales and legends. This granted the students the opportunity to utilize all previous experiences, strengthen their imaginations and develop the habit of sequencing events. The students examined the exchange of dialogue between characters. They realized that they must respond to what was being said, even if it was not what they expected, and that they could lead a dialogue effectively.

The story of Hansel and Gretel (Curry & Clippinger, 1972) granted the students the opportunity to create the scenes of bewilderment, joy, frustration, taking property that did not belong to them and friendship. This fearful adventure with the wicked witch was a challenge for them. It was performed for first graders, who laughed with glee when Hansel outsmarted the witch by showing her, from his cage, a stick for his finger.

Prince Rabbit (Milne, 1966) provided the opportunity for the students to portray a rabbit and spontaneously create his cunning. The role of the magician added zest to the students' verbalization, articulation and expression. This was of great importance to the primary students, as they were learning to

communicate effectively through enjoyment.

The writer chose the Earth and Sky (Dayton, 1969) to give the students a subject that was a part of their environment to debate logically. Two students imagined that they were either the earth or the sky, and each one attempted to convince the other that her part was more important. Inanimate objects were brought to life in this dialogue.

Fontaine's story of "The Rich Man and the Shoemaker" (Dennis & Moldof, 1975) created a quandry for the students. The shoemaker and the rich man both shared the same problem, only in different environments. The writer suggested that the students discuss the story with their parents and, at the following session, share their perspectives on newly acquired wealth. The students related this story with the possibility of winning the lottery. The following week, each student dramatized how he/she would feel after owning the money for a short time, as the shoemaker did.

In the story of The Wonderful Saw (Grimes, 1963), the role of Mr. Silverwand required the students to define and develop feelings. This storekeeper would only fix broken toys for children and did not want to lend his saws to the workmen to clean up a tree that fell across the road. This tree was stopping the circus from coming to town, and he was afraid of his saw being ruined as it belonged to a very special collection. The students had to convince themselves and the other characters that Mr. Silverwand was right, even if the

circus would not be able to come to town and make everyone happy.

The "Hill of Fire" (Lewis, 1971) allowed the students to explore concern, fear and the unexpected occurrences that may happen in reality. As the ground began to grumble and a hole developed in the field where the farmer and his son were plowing, the students displayed fear and concern for each other and the ox. Later they appeared to get in touch with these emotions and take charge of the situation -- to evacuate belongings and animals. This story was well received by the students. During the following weeks, they were still discussing the story and bringing in magazine articles of other volcanoes.

"Chicken Little" (Maison, 1974) was selected as its characters were all animals. The students exhibited movements appropriate for each animal including creating their own sound effects to enhance the story. The story was repeated several times to allow the students to dramatize their version of dismay that the sky was falling!

At this point in time, it was imperative for the students to become more involved in the decision making. When asked their favorite story, it was unanimously decided to recreate Cinderella (Dennis & Moldof, 1975). The writer reminded them they had pantomimed some of the scenes earlier. They insisted that they wanted to recreate the entire story. It was agreed, and they interacted until they had decided who would play what characters. The scenes flowed smoothly until they came to

the wedding scene. The dialogue in the wedding scene became scarce. The students looked at each other for clues. They became uncomfortable and dissatisfied with the outcome. The scene was stopped, and the writer suggested it was time to discuss the situation. The students suddenly realized there was nothing wrong with the play, but they indicated they did not have enough experience with weddings. They did not know how to act except to march up the aisle or what dialogue was acceptable. It was a third-grade girl who said, "I really don't know much about weddings!" The group quickly agreed, and the pressure of the situation was removed. They knew their resources were limited.

Predicting the next scene or occurrence of a story was used to progress to the final study area, which was building (creating) a story. The students read and discussed the first page of Those Nosy, Nosy Neighbors (Haggard & Winsome, 1987). Two woodchucks, Chucky and Ruffles, were scolding the crows for fighting and making so much noise. They told them Ruffles needed her rest. The students acted out this scene. They were requested to predict what the author had intended to happen and to explore the next possible scenes. After each one had a turn, the students met in a circle to discuss their predictions and their reasons for thinking what would happen next. Finally, the group turned the page to read and see what the author had intended. The writer reinforced that their answers were acceptable; however, she urged them to read on and to predict

the next scene. The part of the story entitled "Don't Look Down" had Chucky telling Ruffles they were going to move. The neighborhood was much too noisy for babies. Even the Skunk told Chucky not to go by the farmer's house because of the dog. Chucky had told him to mind his own business as he started for the house. This story continued weekly and the students looked forward to creating the next scene and evaluating what the author had written. It had served to show the students that there was no one correct way, but many ways a story could be created and that each individual expresses oneself verbally as one perceives the world in which one lives.

This was the message conveyed to the students to make use of all of their previous creative dramatics activities, i.e., rhythmic, dramatization of stories, involvement in individual characters and pantomime to build one's own story. These were presented to parents, teachers and classmates in a Creative Dramatics Festival environment. At this time, the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale was utilized to evaluate the scenes, skits or plays (see Appendix C). The students were administered the Post-Horst Attitude Survey to compare the results with the Pre-Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix B) to determine growth in the following areas: the development of the whole child, socially, emotionally, intellectually and environmentally. Finally, the results were shared with the students in a wrap-up session.

A deviation in the original calendar plan occurred at

the end of the school year. Each parent and/or guardian received a Request for Parent Participation in an IEP Planning Meeting (see Appendix F) in accordance with the law that mandated and governed the district's gifted program. This law required that each identified gifted child's plan be reviewed yearly. The form requested parent and/or guardian participation to give input and be fully informed concerning the program and/or placement. If a parent did not respond to the letter within 10 days, an IEP meeting would be held in their absence and a copy of the IEP would be mailed for their final approval.

All parents and/or guardians responded to the request to participate at a time mutually agreed upon by all parties. At the meeting, the writer shared the progress of each student respectively. Confirmation of the student's attendance was sought for the planned summer workshop sessions in July, which would culminate in the Creative Dramatics Festival. At this time, the information gathered indicated that the students were not available to attend. The writer deducted that it was necessary to finalize the creative dramatics activities earlier than originally outlined in the calendar plan (see Appendix E). However, a session was scheduled for July to enable the students to view skits, scenes or plays of the other groups. Transportation was the responsibility of the parents and/or guardians. This was a time of sharing accomplishments.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

This practicum was designed to develop, implement and evaluate developmental strategies to enhance creative dramatics for primary gifted students. The Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix B) depicted each behavioral expectation with five statements in the following areas: identity of self, socialization, emotional, intellectual and environment.

Evaluation of the data derived from the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey revealed that all of the students who participated in this practicum demonstrated an increase in their attitude responses. The average of the possible number of items increased 38% overall. In each behavioral objective the responses revealed the following:

1. Students grew in creative and aesthetic development gaining a knowledge of self. An increase of eight responses on item 1 revealed that the students "liked the way they did things." An increase of four responses on item 2 indicated that the students felt "the world is a good place to live." Items 3-5 each showed an increase of five responses: the students felt they "speak clearly, talk openly about what they think and enjoy doing given tasks." The results revealed that creative dramatics activities were experiences that were comfortable for the students. The skits, scenes and plays provided the opportunity to explore ideas, receive immediate

feedback and watch others accomplish the same character role. Mirroring allowed each to examine themselves objectively (see Table 1).

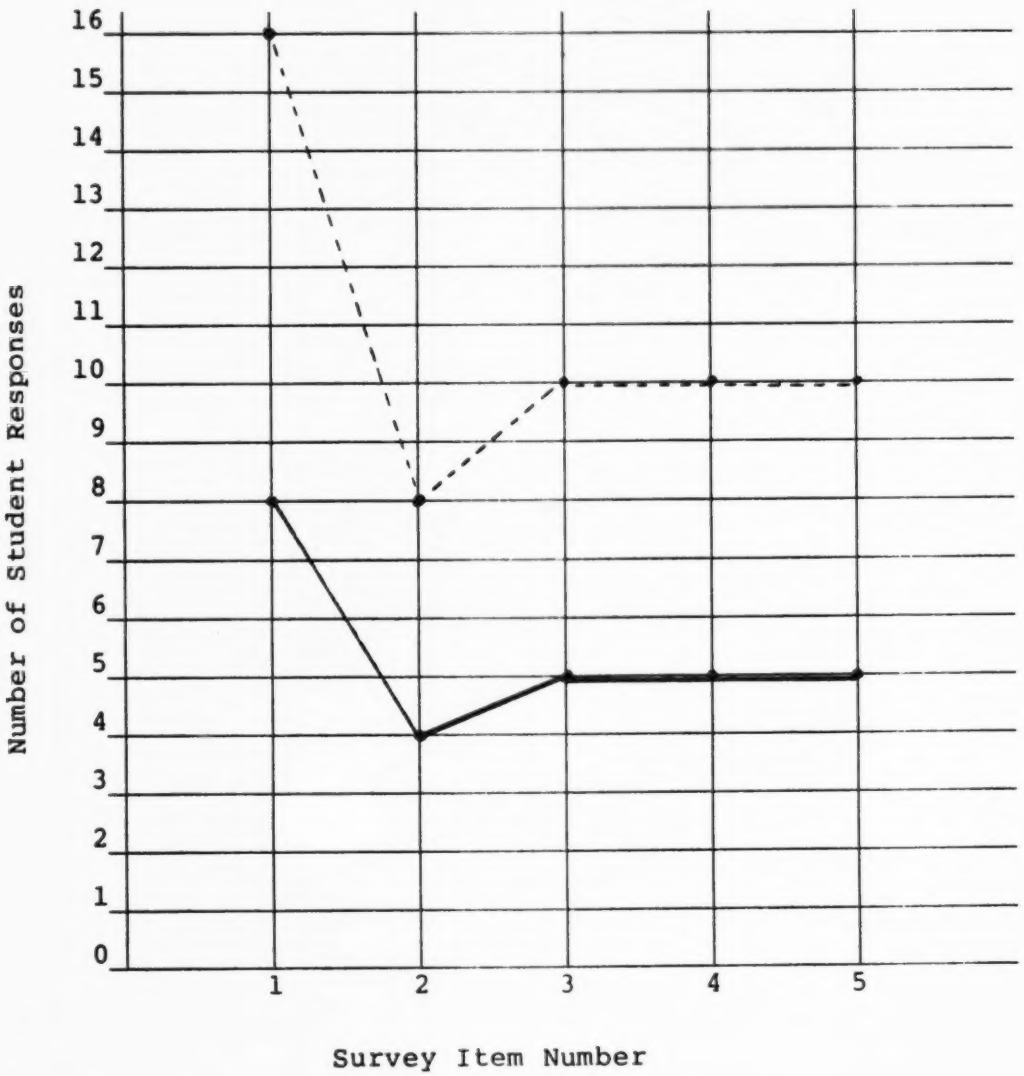
2. Students improved peer socialization and the ability to work cooperatively with others. Item 1 had an increase of 8 responses as the students realized it took them a shorter amount of time to express themselves in a given situation. Item 2 had an increase of 5 responses depicting that "sharing ideas with others" was important. Items 3 and 4 each had an increase of 4 responses indicating that "being a part of a group and feeling comfortable with others" had become a reality for them. Item 5 had an increase of 11 responses which realistically demonstrated that the students easily "say what they feel towards others." The planned creative dramatics experiences prepared the students to share ideas and clues from others; to express themselves through active sensory, social and environmental experiences; and to evaluate their own and others' presentations (see Table 2).

3. Students improved skills necessary for discussion such as responding, attending to the task, interacting and taking turns. Item 1 showed an increase of eight student responses as they felt it was "easier to accept things that happened" after the creative dramatics experiences. Item 2 showed an increase of six student responses as they had examined their "facial, vocal and body expressions to convey their mood" through mirroring, group discussion critique and pantomiming.

Table 1

Identity of Self (Results of the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey)

Students were to gain a knowledge of self by developing creatively and understanding aesthetically.



Pre Survey Responses _____

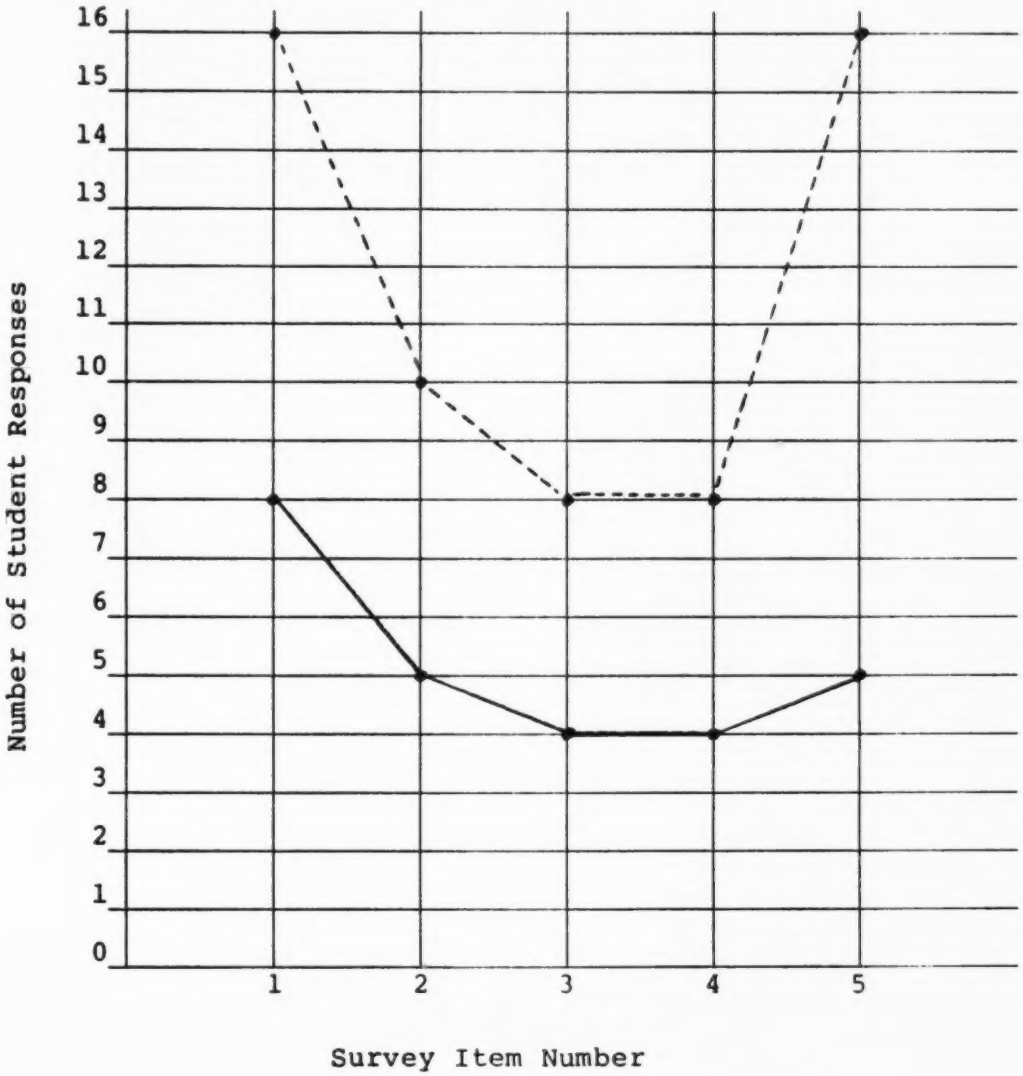
Post Survey Responses - - -

Number of student responses that improved for each item from the Pre (___) to Post (---) Survey.

Table 2

Socialization (Results of the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey)

Students were to further peer socialization and the ability to work cooperatively with others.



Pre Survey Responses _____

Post Survey Responses - - -

Number of student responses that improved for each item from the Pre (___) to Post (---) Survey.

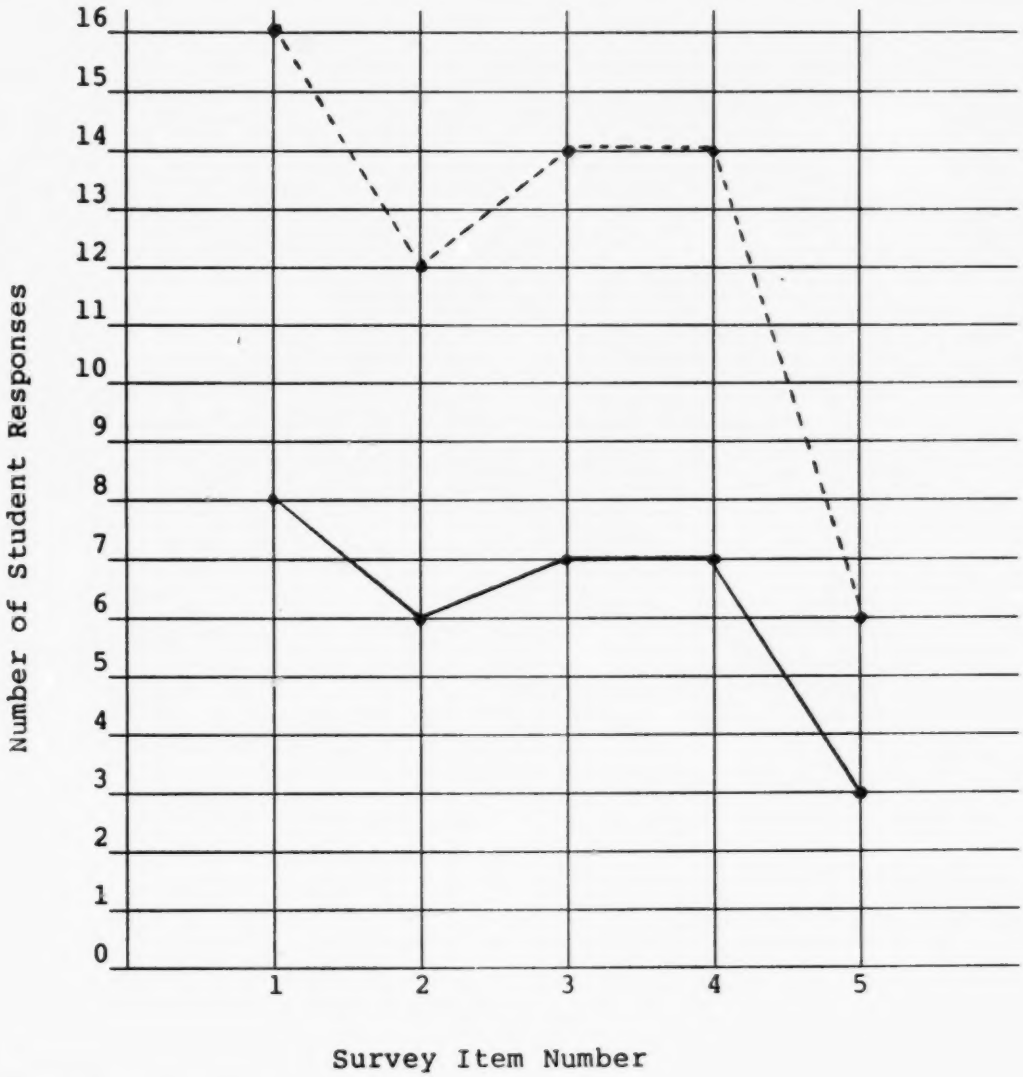
Items 3 and 4 showed an increase of seven student responses as they felt "satisfaction doing a good job" and became "involved easier in given situations." Item 5 showed an increase of three responses as the students "felt comfortable with their creative dramatics accomplishments." The perseverance and deep involvement required for a student to receive an emotional attachment was attained through the planned creative dramatics activities (Torrance, 1979). To love the activity or to become emotionally involved was necessary as the increase in student responses revealed (see Table 3).

4. Students examined, exercised and channeled emotions appropriately. Item 1 showed an increase of eight students responses revealing that students felt "solving a problem was easier" after developing skills which were directed to develop deliberate attention to creative problem solving. Item 2 showed an increase of seven responses as the students liked "creating new situations" to given situations, teacher and/or student directed. Item 3 revealed an increase of six responses indicating that the students liked to "think about new ideas" in a creative dramatic fashion. The students had confronted given tasks, redefined them presented their interpretations for others to scrutinize. Item 4 showed a modest increase of two responses that the students liked "a challenge" presented to them. It is the writer's opinion that this question may have received this small increase because the gifted students took it out of context since the perception of the group, its

Table 3

Emotional (Results of the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey)

Students were to improve skills necessary for discussion such as responding, attending to the task, interacting and taking turns.



Pre Survey Responses _____

Post Survey Responses - - -

Number of student responses that improved for each item from the Pre (___) to Post (---) Survey.

eagerness displayed to create and the students' total commitment to plunge forward were positive during the study. Item 5 revealed an increase of eight responses indicating that the students "liked to show imagination in their conversation" as they presented their skits or scenes. This imagination in conversation was displayed frequently, for example, as Jack informed the stranger on the road, "You want me to take those little beans for all of this cow?" (see Table 4).

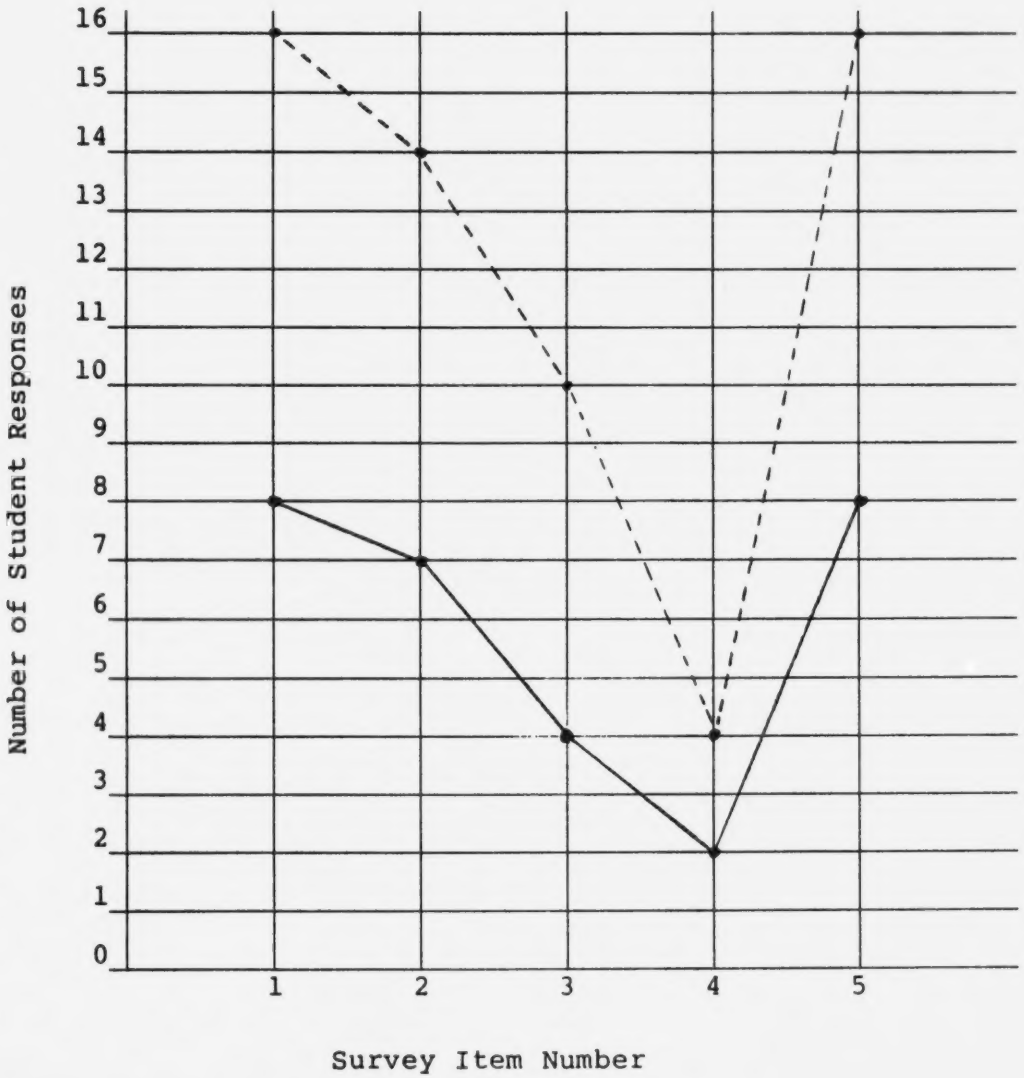
5. Students demonstrated the ability to participate in creative dramatics. Item 1 showed an increase of seven responses when students were given the statement, "I know what I want to do or be in a given situation." The writer observed the students in all situations as they searched for the unknown, reacted within boundaries in the group and presented a skit or scene demonstrating creativity. Items 2 and 3 revealed an increase of eight responses each as the students indicated they "knew what to do when asked to do creative dramatics, how to start;" and they felt they "were curious about the world in which they live." Crossup (1966) indicated if a student is provided the opportunity to discover dramatics creatively, he/she will enter into daring experiences in reality. Item 4 showed an increase of four responses as students indicated they were "willing to try new things." Item 5 showed an increase of four responses which indicated they felt they "give other people a turn" at the appropriate time (see Table 5).

After inspection of this data, the results showed that

Table 4

Intellectual (Results of the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey)

Students were to examine, exercise and channel emotions appropriately.



Pre Survey Responses _____

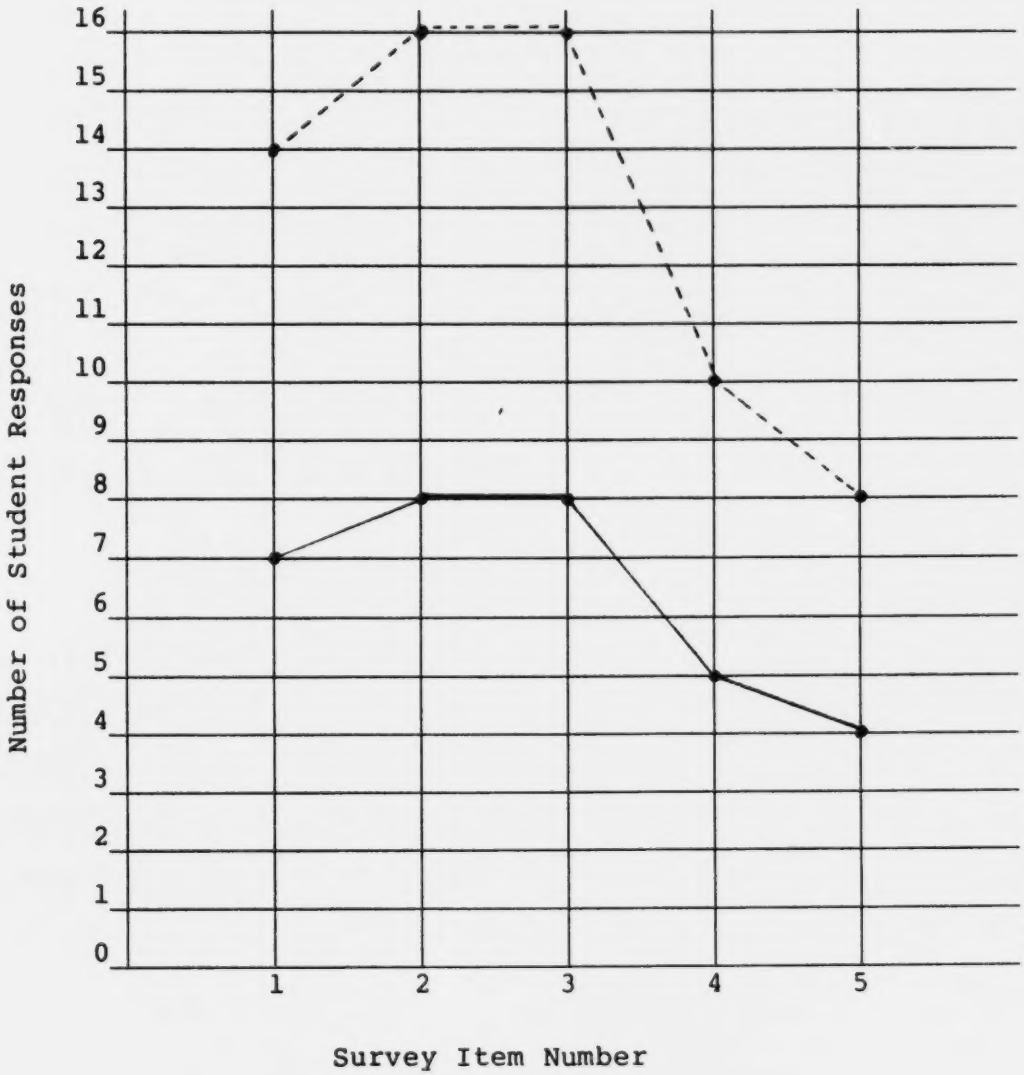
Post Survey Responses - - -

Number of student responses that improved for each item from the Pre (___) to Post (---) Survey.

Table 5

Environmental (Results of the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey)

Students were to demonstrate the ability to participate in creative dramatics successfully.



Pre Survey Responses _____

Post Survey Responses - - -

Number of student responses that improved for each item from the Pre (___) to Post (---) Survey.

the students did find they enjoyed the creative dramatics experiences and benefited from them. The writer had predicted a 30% increase on the Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey as a criterion of success, and the results showed 5% overall above this prediction.

After the experiences of creative dramatics for primary gifted students were completed, the parents, teachers and peers were requested to rate the performances. The Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix C), which consists of six areas of performance, was completed by members of the audience whether they were parents, teachers or peers. This was a 5-point scale which indicated "(1) no opinion," "(2) poor," "(3) fair," "(4) good," "(5) excellent." A maximum total points that a student might receive was 600. The lowest range of points after all performances were viewed and rated was 485 and the highest was 580 (see Appendix G). The skit that received 485 points was a story of a girl in the park where a stranger tried to give her drugs. The skit that received 580 points was a story of the girl's favorite doll that came to life.

One performance of "Annie, Twenty Years Later" was presented for parents and peers at a Parents' Visitation Day. The students' regular classroom teacher requested that they present it. This performance was not rated; but numerous positive comments were extended to the students and the writer.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the data revealed that the developmental

strategies enhancing creative dramatics for primary gifted students were stimulating and effective. The five creative dramatics activity areas, i.e., rhythmic, dramatization of stories, involvement in individual characters, pantomime and building one's own story were selected from sources, adapted to meet the needs of the students involved, and presented weekly during the year (see Appendix H). It is apparent that this practicum may encourage teachers of primary gifted students to foster an environment which stimulates creative dramatics activities and affective expression.

At the end of the school year, each parent and/or guardian received a Request for Parent Participation in an IEP Planning Meeting (see Appendix F). This was in accordance with the law that each identified gifted child's plan be reviewed yearly. Participation of parents is greatly desired so that they may give input and be fully informed concerning the program and/or placement. If a parent does not respond to the letter within 10 days, an IEP meeting is held in their absence. A copy of the IEP is mailed for their approval.

All parents responded to the request to participate at a time mutually agreed upon by all parties. At the meeting, the writer shared the progress of each student respectively. Information and a request was extended to each to participate in weekly dramatics sessions during the month of July which would culminate in a Creative Dramatics Festival for all. The parents and/or guardians expressed how difficult a workshop

would be since it is over 20 miles for some students to travel to the school and there is no public transportation available in this area. Several parents informed the writer of planned family summer vacations and enrollment in summer camps; and others indicated that a break from the school routine was a priority for their children. They were sincerely interested in their childrens' accomplishments and asked the writer to examine the feasibility of scheduling the Creative Dramatics Festival before the close of school in June. After all of the conferences were completed, the writer met with each class to use decision making skills to determine the feasibility of holding the Creative Dramatics Festival before the summer recess.

The students rallied to the cause. They were determined to share their creative dramatics experiences with their parents and/or guardians. The students designed a letter using the Print Shop software on the Apple IIE computer to present to their families requesting them to attend a Creative Dramatics Festival at each center and to assist in the evaluation of the program (see Appendix I).

The students completed the Post Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix B). After all surveys were completed, the writer shared the results with the students. In group discussion, the students were inquisitive regarding the experiences of the other groups. At this time, the writer decided that a final Creative Dramatics Festival would be arranged for all

of the groups to meet and experience what other gifted students had accomplished. They were stimulated to surprise the writer by creating something new they would like to share. They were encouraged to use their classmates, friends or other family members.

In July, the writer extended an invitation to all of the primary gifted students who participated in the creative dramatics experiences to attend the final Creative Dramatics Festival. It was held at the writer's home to entice the students to make a special effort to attend and bring their families and friends (see Appendix D). All participants were not available, some parents sent their children with another family and some dropped their children off for the festival and returned later to pick them up. Other siblings and friends attended the festival. The students presented their favorite skit or scene, sometimes using individuals who had not been a part of the practicum. A newspaper reporter, outfitted with a camera, attended to share this festival with the community in the local newspaper (see Appendix J).

In conversation with the writer, parents have shared stories of their children involving the family in short plays or skits. They have been surprised at the level of debate in which these students have become engaged while performing creative dramatics. In many of the scenes, the students would make each other talk them into or out of a situation which would be agreeable to both character roles.

In conclusion, the creative dramatics techniques selected were appropriate for the solution for the writer's practicum because they involved students gradually, by going from simple to complex activities. They also involved students initially in large group activities, then small group activities, then individual activities. Finally, students were involved in usng their own creativity. Examination of the students' responses to "what creative dramatics means to me personally" before and after the scheduled activities indicates that it was a valuable experience for them (see Appendix B).

The strategies selected were techniques that are readily available and were presented by the writer according to the Calendar Plan of Implementation (see Appendix E). They did not require an additional outlay of financial support, new materials or additional personnel. They were strategies which aroused the interest of the primary gifted students in the exciting world of creative dramatics. Finally, students grew in all objectives projected for this practicum.

Recommendations

The writer highly recommends that teachers of primary gifted students create an atmosphere which will stimulate their inquisitiveness. The strategies used enhanced the creative dramatics process for primary gifted students as they were encouraged to participate in the following areas: rhythmic, dramatization of stories, involvement in individual characters,

pantomime and building one's own story. The following steps have been proven successful for primary gifted students:

1. to choose a topic which has special meaning to them;
2. to make a word list, if necessary;
3. to share idea clues;
4. to experiment with dialogue;
5. to experiment with body movement;
6. to share their prepared skit or scene with others;

In retrospect, it is the recommendation of the writer that one consider conducting the entire creative dramatics activities over a period of time that is confined to the regular school calendar to avoid the unexpected. However, the final creative dramatics festival held after the closing of the regular school calendar allowed the students time to assimilate their experiences, adding zest to their skits and/or scenes presented. Consequently, each student, having achieved success in this creative dramatics practicum, was presented a Creative Dramatics Achievement Award drafted by the writer (see Appendix K).

Dissemination

These creative dramatics strategies have been presented to interested teachers of the writer's school district for possible implementation. The district will continue to utilize this curriculum area to enhance the gifted program offered to primary gifted students. The summer Creative Dramatics Festival received special recognition from the local newspaper (see Appendix J).

It is hoped that selected portions of the practicum will be offered at a gifted and talented conference with a special presentation given by the writer. She also plans to write an article to be submitted to Young Children, Learning or Early Years.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER: NEED FOR CREATIVE DRAMATICS

Star Route Box 376
Lakeville. PA 18438

August 15. 1986

To whom it may concern:

From 1977 until 1985, the district required that all elementary children present a play each year for peers and parents. As of September 1985 this has been changed. Additional teachers have been added to the staff. Now each second grade student receives two physical education, one music, one art, and one library class each week. In addition to this, the third graders also have a class of flutephone and theory.

This expansion of the curriculum allows less time for the basic subjects. Therefore teachers are not now required to have a classroom play; but may do so if they so choose.

In my opinion, there is a need for dramatics and the development of creativity for the elementary school child.

Sincerely,

Shirley Strauss

Shirley Strauss
Head Teacher

APPENDIX B

PRE-POST HORST ATTITUDE SURVEY AND RESPONSES

Pre-Post Horst Attitude Survey

Read each item carefully. Respond to each question based on the following 5-point scale. Circle the appropriate number.

- 1 - - - - 2 - - - - - 3 - - - - - - - - - 4 - - - - - - - 5 - - -
Never Seldom Sometimes Most of the Time Always

Identity of Self

1.	I like the way I do things.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	I feel the world is a good place to live.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I speak clearly.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I talk openly about what I think and feel.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I enjoy doing given tasks.	1 2 3 4 5

Socialization

1.	It takes me a short time to express how I feel.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	I like sharing my ideas with others.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I like being part of a group.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I feel comfortable being with others.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I can easily say what I feel towards others.	1 2 3 4 5

Emotional

1.	It is easy for me to accept things that happen.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	My facial, vocal and body expressions convey my mood.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	It satisfies me to do a good job.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I become involved easily in situations.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I feel comfortable with my accomplishments.	1 2 3 4 5

Horst Attitude Survey, continued

Intellectual

1.	I can easily solve a problem.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	I like creating new situations.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I like to think about new ideas.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I like a challenge.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I like to show imagination in my conversation.	1 2 3 4 5

Environmental

1.	I know what I want to do or be in a given situation.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	When I am asked to do creative dramatics, I know how to start.	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I am curious about the world in which I live.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	I am willing to try new things.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I give other people a turn.	1 2 3 4 5

Write a sentence that tells what creative dramatics is and tell what it means to your personally.

APPENDIX B

Pre-Horst Attitude Survey Responses to the following statement: Write a sentence that tells what creative dramatics is and tell what it means to you personally.

I think it is science and work!

You can change one thing to another.

I think it will teach me a lot; but I really don't know what it is.

I think it is mathematics!

I think it is to make something safe.

Doing good things for other people!

Doing things with other people in front of an audience.

People talking.

Creating new things.

I don't know what it is; but I hope to learn.

I think creative dramatics means creative writing. (3 responses)

I think it is when someone creates something.

Seeing new things.

I don't know.

Post-Horst Attitude Survey responses to the following statement: Write a sentence that tells what creative dramatics is and tell what it means to you personally (sentence structure unedited).

Creative dramatics means to share feelings. I liked being a rabbit. He was a shrimp and yet the most important.
Creative dramatics is different from other subjects. I liked when I would outsmart a human as a rabbit.
You create little things that are in your imagination. I liked being Jack in the beanstalk because it was fun telling mom all the reasons I didn't want to sell Milky White.
Creative dramatics is acting out by memory. I liked the way I sounded as Rumpelstiltskin.
I liked acting out movements and not talking. It was fun and easy to be a rabbit.
I think it helped me improve my socialization and my mind!
I liked being the sorcerer because I could be tricky and clever!
It is doing things with imagination! I think its fun! I liked acting and being a rabbit!
Creative dramatics is acting out ideas. I liked being Lord Calomel in Prince Rabbit because he acts funny and makes a fool of himself.
Creative dramatics is doing something of your own. I felt like I was brave when I was a guard for the King in Rumpelstiltskin!

Creative dramatics is using feelings and motions. I liked being Annie when she was packing her suitcase because I could be sad.

Creative dramatics made me happy. I like being Jack with the cow behind me. It gave me a little "funniness" to it!

Creative dramatics was fun. It was fun stealing and it was O.K.

Creative dramatics has a lot of feeling. I liked when the lady at the orphanage gets mad at Annie. It was fun!

Creative dramatics made me happy. I liked being Jack because he is nice to his mother.

Creative dramatics is having fun while acting. I liked the story of Ashley because she could do fun things.

Creative dramatics is seeing things in a new way. I liked being a wizard because I could yell whenever I wanted. It was lots of fun being rich!

APPENDIX C

Horst Creative Dramatics Scale

Kindly rate the following questions based on the following 5-point scale. Circle the appropriate number.

- - 1 - - - - - 2 - - - - - 3 - - - - - 4 - - - - - 5 - - -
No Opinion Poor Fair Good Excellent

1.	Did the actors express creativity?	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Did the actors show feeling?	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Did you become involved in the dramatization?	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Did the dramatization flow smoothly? (Did it move too fast or too slow?)	1 2 3 4 5
5.	Did the actors convey the message through their language?	1 2 3 4 5
6.	Did the actors convey the message through their acting and movement?	1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX D

Letter of invitation to a creative dramatics summer festival.

Star Route Box 609
Lakeville, PA 18438

July 18, 1987

Dear

You had such a good time performing special creative dramatics scenes, I thought you might like to share your ideas with the other groups. We could get together on my deck and have a Creative Dramatics Festival.

You may wish to create your own short scene or story possibly asking others to help you (brothers, sisters, classmates, and/or parents).

Friday, July 24, 6:30 P.M.
Raindate Monday, July 27, 6:30 P.M.

After everyone performs, we will have time for a swim and refreshments.

Call me and let me know if you will attend and what creative dramatics scene you will perform.

If you have further questions, please call me at 226-9031.
Hope to see you.

Sincerely,

Alice Horst

APPENDIX E

Calendar Plan of Implementation

November 1986	Administration of Pre-Horst Attitude Survey
	Introduction of Creative Dramatics
	Rhythmic Activities
December 1986/ January 1987	Pantomime
February/March 1987	Involvement in Individual Characters
March/April 1987	Dramatization of Stories
May/June 1987	Building Your Own Story
	Creative Dramatics Presentation
June 1987	Administration of Post-Horst Attitude Survey
	Administration of Creative Dramatics Scale
July 1987	Creative Dramatics Festival
August 1987 - February 1988	Preparation of report and submission to practicum reviewer

The calendar plan specified above incorporated approximately one creative dramatics activity per week over the duration of the practicum.

REQUEST FOR PARENT PARTICIPATION IN AN IEP PLANNING MEETING

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

(Parent's Name and Address) (Local School District/Responsible Official)

Date: _____

Dear _____(Student, Parent, Guardian or Surrogate Parent)

Your son/daughter has been identified as an exceptional student. We recommend that he/she be provided a special education. We wish to arrange a Program Planning Meeting for:

_____(Student's complete name)

The purpose for this meeting is:

( ) Review of IEP to determine if an extended program is appropriate.
( ) Initial development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
( ) Revision of an IEP.
( ) Dismissal from Program.

IEP planning participants will include a local educational agency representative and/or Special Education Supervisor, teacher(s), you and anyone else you would like to invite.

Your participation is greatly desired so that you may give input and be fully informed concerning the program and/or placement of your child.

If you would like to participate or need further information, please check below. You may also choose not to participate at this time.

If you do not respond to this letter within 10 days, we will hold an IEP meeting in your absence. A copy of the IEP will be sent to you for your approval.

_____

Individualized Education Program Planner (LEA)

Please check, sign and return:

( ) I would like to participate in a program planning meeting at a mutually convenient time.

( ) I am not clear as to what this IEP planning meeting means. Please call me.

( ) I do not desire to participate in a Program Planning Meeting at this time, and request that a copy of the completed IEP be sent to me for my approval.

I can be reached at the following telephone number: _____ Time: _____

Or at the following address: _____

_____(Date) _____

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

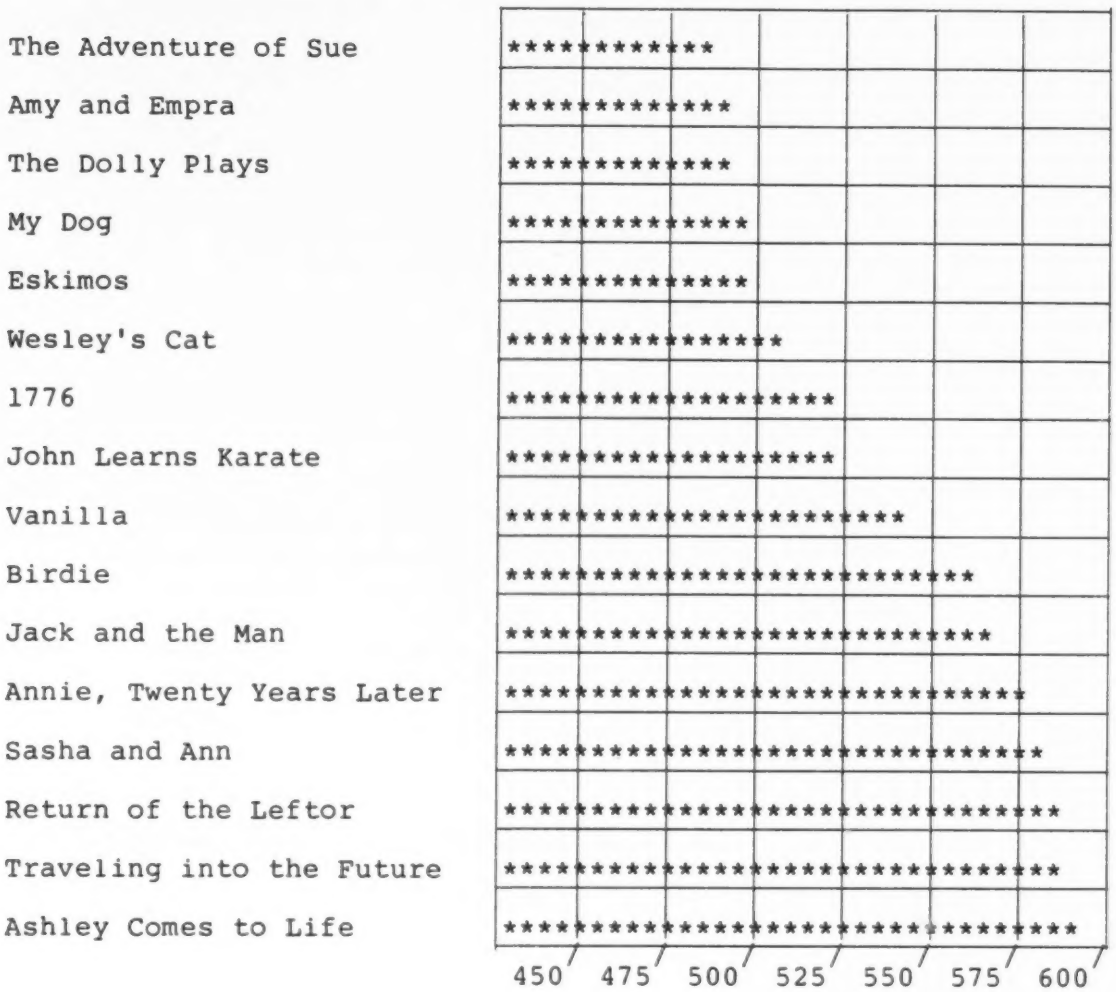
_____ _____ _____

(Teacher) (Grade) (School)

Copies: IU, Teacher, Parent District)

APPENDIX G

Results of the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale



Numbers represent the total of 20 individuals' critiques for for each scene or skit (600 is the total points possible). The maximum of 30 points for each critique using the following scale: 30 x 20 - 600 points.

- - 1 - - - - - 2 - - - - - 3 - - - - - 4 - - - - - 5 - - -

No Opinion Poor Fair Good Excellent

APPENDIX H

Detailed Conclusion

It is apparent that this practicum may encourage teachers of primary gifted students to foster an environment which stimulates creative dramatics activities and affective expression. At the initial onset of administering the Pre-Horst Attitude Survey (see Appendix A), the students' interest was aroused. One student asked the teacher to explain what "seldom" meant; the first sign of sharing ideas and clues from each other had occurred. The other students quickly reinforced the student's self-image as they thanked him for asking because they too were not certain as to what it meant. It was not a familiar word to them.

Crossup (1966) indicated that creative dramatics allow the students to enter into daring experiences in reality. As the teacher instructed the students to experience breathing exercises and to rest on the floor, the girls were attempting to sit or rest on their stomachs. They discovered it could not be accomplished in that position and did rest on their backs. As the teacher continued to instruct the body movement activities, the students explored being a caterpillar. At this time, one boy exhibited unusual movements as he used kata motions. One girl did not use her arms to fly. Later, she indicated she was propelled by an unknown force.

The following activities that allowed the students to

explore body movements conveyed emotions to the observers. The leaves as they changed color (Woods, 1970) and the maple wings (Woods, 1970) served as nonverbal communication to the group. During the discussion, one girl shared that she was eaten by the birds, while another had attempted to cross the road and was run over by a car. The teacher later discovered that both girls had recently experienced a death in their families. The students concluded that, as with the caterpillar, some people live and some people die; there was no way they could control it. McCaslin (1984) stated that the young child tends to express physically what an adult states in words. These two activities had been an example of this.

The inflated balloon led the students to use words as they experienced passing, tossing and rolling a balloon. McCaslin (1984) reinforced that as the child gains confidence, movement merges with improvisation and words are the last element to be added. It was the red balloon as it slipped away that the students associated this happening with the story and began a dialogue. It was a natural occurrence.

The second area of study, pantomime, promoted expression. Moffet (1968) indicated that peer socialization becomes a learning experience not usually possible outside of the classroom. These students had limited opportunity to socialize as they were busy with assignments during the school day. The teacher challenged the students to create letters using only their bodies. After they accomplished the letters to

everyone's satisfaction, they were instructed to spell words. It was the word "kangaroo" that led the group to the dictionary and subsequently to discover that they were spelling the word backwards. After practicing some words, the group constructed small words for the first grade class to decipher. The students were pleased with their accomplishment. They were eager to perform again and were looking forward to the next opportunity. Pantomiming had been an enjoyable experience for the students.

The third study area which explored individual characters was stimulated by the opera Rumpelstiltskin staged by a local opera company for the elementary students. At the beginning of the story where the miller took his daughter to the king, the soldier immediately let them in. The students quickly questioned whether the miller had been convincing enough to get in to see the king. They compared him to the President of the United States and said there was no way a miller could get in to see him. The students exchanged roles, one being the daughter, one the soldier of the guard and one the miller. At discussion time, one boy shared that he liked being the soldier as it made him feel very brave and important. Another said it was hard to convince someone of something that was not possible -- spinning straw into gold.

When one of the girls played the soldier of the guard and the miller was trying to convince him to let them in, the guard responded, "What a silly thing!" The group all laughed. Playing the miller's daughter did not demand a great deal of

effort until she could not spin straw into gold. Some of the students found that trying to be sad and crying was not as easy as it appeared on television.

Annie was one of the students' favorites. The boys played her and couldn't wait until it was their turn to play the lady at the orphanage. She was mean! They enjoyed trying out this part. One boy said, "It was fun being mean when it didn't hurt anyone." The role of Daddy Warbucks was not one of their favorites. It was only played once and there was no interest to redo it; however, everyone played Annie and the mean lady at the orphanage.

Jack and the Beanstalk was another exciting story for the students. The students enjoyed being the giant (because he was exceptionally mean), the housekeeper (who was very kind) and Jack. Jack was the typical kid. The students had him do all the things a kid would do; for example: not talking to strangers, not being willing to go to town to sell the cow, not believing the stranger, arguing with himself whether to steal the giant's possessions, etc. The writer enjoyed observing the interaction and felt that one student's statement made the whole practicum worthwhile: "It's really neat, this creative dramatics. Did you know I could steal and it was okay? This is fun!"

The fourth study area -- the dramatization of stories, selected scenes from folk tales and legends -- granted the students the opportunity to utilize all their previous

experiences. Hansel and Gretel delighted the first graders. The students enjoyed stealing food from the witch's house and liked tricking the witch with a stick when she asked for Hansel's finger to see if he had fattened up enough to eat. At casting time, the students decided what they wanted to be; but when they started to create the dramatics and dialogue, they discovered that a taller girl would make a better witch. It did not seem right for Hansel and Gretel to be taller than the witch. They concluded that children had to be shorter to be convincing to the audience. This play reinforced Pierini's theory (1971) that creative dramatics leads to an appreciation of values: beauty, imagination and joy and is as satisfying as having enough to eat.

Prince Rabbit supported Meeker's theory (1979) that indicated creative dramatics enhances problem solving and creativity. This rabbit had to be cunning, shrewd and able to overcome all the obstacles placed in front of him. The students did. One girl, who was usually very quiet, stunned the group when she played the magician. She told the rabbit to be quiet and have patience. The students began to laugh, stopped the play and told her they were glad she had told the rabbit off. They told her she should stand up for her rights more often. It was surprising to the writer since the girl playing the rabbit was usually the strongest in the group, in the regular classroom and on the playground. It indeed was an accomplishment for the girl playing the magician.

The Hill of Fire allowed the students to explore concern, fear and unexpected events that occur in reality. Crossup (1966) indicated that students enter into daring experiences in reality. The students did as they showed fear and commitment. They had to move themselves and their belongings. This story continued for many weeks as the students brought in newspaper and magazine articles about volcanoes.

After the completion of predicting the ending of stories, the students were involved in creating their own stories or scenes to present to their classmates, parents and teachers. The students decided to use brainstorming techniques to select a topic, idea or event. For example, they listed all the words they could think of that might be associated with "cat." They used the thesaurus to discover words that might be used to described the word "cat." This process was accomplished alone and in small groups of two or three. Rico and Clagett (1980) suggested using the chalkboards and that the entire group become involved in this activity.

As the students began to construct sentences, they used words that were pertinent to their particular topic. They were encouraged to read out loud to the others, seeking approval or suggestions for improvement. At this time, the students discovered they were tossing dialogue back and forth, leading each other on. A story was evolving. The Adventures of Sue flowed when the teacher instructed the students to think about something that just happened or to talk about something that

concerned them. Tre-Hab, a program that helps students examine what to do in case someone offers drugs to them, had recently been a part of their curriculum experience. Three girls made a short skit of a scene that took place in the park, where a stranger tried to give them drugs. One girl was willing to accept them and the other said, "No!" Later the girls were found to be in the home of the girl who had said, "No!" It was here that the girls talked it out and involved a parent in the predicament. They decided it was not right and had the parent try to find the stranger through the police department. Dempsey (1985) suggested that research had indicated that creative dramatics enhances and improves students' skills in solving problems. These girls solved the conflict satisfactorily and this skit received 485 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G). The writer feels that the skit may have received a higher rating if it had been presented to students in a higher grade, rather than to first graders.

The story of Amy and Empra evolved as one of the girls said, "I didn't do anything special."

Another student asked, "What do you do when your friends come over to play?"

She responded, "We play school and I like to be the librarian." Before they realized it, the two were constructing a story about Abraham Lincoln stopping at their house on his way to Gettysburg (see Appendix L). As he waited for the wheel

of his carriage to be repaired, he was warming his hands by Amy's fire. He was telling them about Gettysburg. He shared with them that he was having difficulty writing this special speech. The girls coaxed him to say it for them. When he stopped, the two girls blurted out the line "that all men are created equal." He was pleased with this ending and went on his way. This story received 490 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

The Dolly Plays is a story of a little girl, her younger brother, several toys and the student's favorite doll having a tea party (see Appendix L). The students imitated the sound effects of the toys. One boy especially enjoyed making the monkey sounds and another became involved behind the scenes to add narration. The story had everyone enjoying the tea party, and they finished the day with a swim. The participants all had an enjoyable time. The audience was amused with the sound effects. This story received 490 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

The story of My Dog, Tippy, developed after a second grader said, "I used to have a dog, but it died!" The teacher and the students urged her to tell about her dog. She didn't realize the impact she had on the students as she simply told how she fed, cared for and loved her dog. The students were so responsive that she decided to try to write about it. Pierini (1971) indicated that creative dramatics leads to an appreciation of beauty, joy, etc. The young girl's poem is as follows:

My Dog, Tippy

Tippy was a nice little brown and white dog.
He played with me - We liked to jog.
He liked to shake my hand.
He ate dog food - that was canned.
I loved him so! One day he died!
And I don't know why! (see Appendix L)

As she simply said, "I loved him so! One day he died!" her body language was one of hopelessness. She shrugged her shoulders and stretched out her arms and quietly said, "And I don't know why!" All was silent; the students were involved in questioning themselves in their minds. The teacher began to applaud and smiles appeared as the students overcame the impact of her monologue. She too began to smile. She was rated at 495 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

A second grader searching for a topic told of reading about Eskimos. The students picked up on his clues and he created a dialogue about a young boy who went on a hunting trip with the men of the village. He pantomimed how scared and excited the boy was. He concluded with a dialogue about his mother sharing how brave he felt and she telling him how proud she was of him. Crossup (1966) indicated that creative dramatics experiences are worthy activities as they provide students the opportunity to be anything or anyone. This boy vicariously became a young Eskimo lad. The young people in

the audience were able to show empathy. He received 495 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

The writer encouraged group sharing by asking each student to tell about something that happened that was special to him/her. Individually, students were encouraged to think about something relevant to each of them. While the students and the teacher discussed out loud, the teacher listed their choices on the board. It was spontaneous as one boy yelled out. "I know what I'll tell about. My cat!"

The skit of Wesley's Cat, 505 points, (see Appendix G), turned out to be about a young boy who always wanted a cat, but his mother said "No!" One of the girls whom he selected reluctantly played his mother, compromising with him. The plot placed him in a car waiting for his mother in a large shopping mall. He had to stay in the car because she had given in to his wishes to pick up the cat first on the trip and he did not want to leave it alone in the car. This was his first experience being left in the car alone. He expressed his anxiety and caring toward the cat fluently during the time that his mother shopped. Linn (1968) stressed that the young child needs to use language continuously as he develops his character within the community. This monologue in the parking lot reinforced this theory. It was there through creative dramatics that this boy could work out his feelings (see Appendix L).

The story of 1776, 520 points, (see Appendix G), was a spin off of Amy and Empra. It was connected with the writing

of the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson. It began with a monologue, where the student was asking himself several questions out loud as he was studying for a social studies test. He fell asleep and became involved in a discussion with Thomas Jefferson, questioning his long hair and how different his clothes were. The two expounded about the Declaration of Independence until the words were appropriate for both of them. At the end, the young student awoke saying, "I must have been dreaming. Wow, what a dream!" Chambers and Lowry (1975) maintained that creative dramatics, in any form, is a stimulus for growth in oral language. This skit provided a mode for the student to expand his concepts of Thomas Jefferson and express himself orally (see Appendix L).

One student, while interacting with others to spontaneously choose a topic, said, "I know what I'll tell about. I bet no one knows karate. There is no one in my class who takes lessons." Quickly the students turned their attention and interest toward him, spurring him on. He promptly began to demonstrate karate motions. Using dialogue, he expanded his theme to include a friend. He had this person convince him into taking karate lessons with him. He was comfortable with his choice of a topic. When presented to the audience, he performed admirably and displayed great confidence. This performance reinforced Helfer and Shapiro's study (1973) that indicated idea spurring would produce results for simple creative dramatics (see Appendix L).

Vanilla, 540 points, (see Appendix G), resulted from idea spurring to the satisfaction of the students. The student was flexible to move on her own and enlarge her ideas progressively. Vanilla was a white pet goat who ran away when it broke loose from its rope. One of the students role played the goat and another one a dog who killed it. She creatively dramatized her sorrow, finally running to her mother for comfort. The mother's role was played by one of the taller students. The students had again decided that it was sometimes important to try to utilize body size to develop character roles. They indicated it would be more believable to the audience. The writer was pleased that the students had discovered this in a natural way through creative dramatics experiences. After the performance, the young children in the audience expressed empathy to the girl and asked more questions if there had really been a goat named Vanilla.

Another student decided to tell a story about a bird she found hurt in the field. She indicated that she wanted to become a veterinarian. She chose the smallest student to be the injured bird and the tallest for the role of the veterinarian. She was the little girl who discovered the injured bird. She decided to have a narrator to keep the audience informed because she wanted a time delay. This story received 560 points (see Appendix G). It held the interest of the audience and it was something they could be associated with in real life. A study by Curry and Clippinger (1972) granted

the students to experience bewilderment, frustration and joy. This adventure she had with the bird provided her the opportunity to experience these feelings. She was allowed to seek a way to satisfy her caring and attempt to experience her choice of careers at this time through this creative dramatics experience.

Jack and the Man was a modern day version of Jack and the Beanstalk. Jack, a modern day young man, was found to debate the issue of selling "Milky White", his favorite cow. He questioned the decision his mother had made. He felt there were other alternatives. The students decided to change roles during the play. The next scene found Jack discussing the danger of going to town alone. It was dark and a very long way to walk. Jack was now being played by a girl. She did not wish to go and her mother had quite a job convincing her it was the only thing to do; also, that she could count on her big girl. In the next scene, the children switched roles again. The stranger was the tallest student and Jack was the smallest. Jack had learned in school he was not to talk to strangers. The stranger almost did not get a conversation going. After lengthy debate, he sold the beans only after the stranger guaranteed that they would grow.

Of course, mother was furious with Jack, took his television privileges away and spanked him severely. They were going to be hungry, but she threw the beans out the window and they did grow -- not to the sky, but to be beautiful beans that

she could sell. She received more money than expected and had enough to buy a lottery ticket. The inevitable happened. She won! She now had enough money to feed her children. The next season she planted more beans. This time one did reach to the sky. This was her road to her new home; for she and her family went to live with the giant because he had the best view of the world and had enough money to buy him all he wanted to eat. He no longer desired eating little boys. All of the children played a character role in this production. The parents and children laughed freely at some of the predicaments the roles encountered. They truly related to the antics. Jack ranked 565 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

Annie, Twenty Years Later cast Annie as a mother with a young girl going shopping in a large shopping mall. Little Annie became lost and her mother could not find her; she encountered very little help from all of the agencies. There was no little Annie to be found. However, during the time she was gone, little Annie did many good deeds for people and managed to live on her own in a park under an evergreen tree until the police found her. (Teacher's comment: About this time, the television news reported a story of a woman who, in fact, did live in a park for the last year and had refused to move. She was emphasizing peace.) After the police found little Annie, she was returned to live happily every after with her parents. The writer, as an observer, saw the students

involve the audience in experiencing deep feelings. The students conveyed them freely and made the audience a part of the frustration of losing a loved one; they watched a young girl be responsible and help society and finally to feel relief as she returned home to be safe in her mother's loving arms. Curry and Clippinger (1972) indicated the importance of creative dramatics through a study that provided the students the opportunity to experience joy, friendship and bewilderment. Annie, Twenty Years Later was the enactment of those feelings. It ranked 575 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

Torrance and Shafter (1986) stated that excellence in education is a mastery of the language and the ability of each student to communicate with care. The story of Shasha and Ann (see Appendix L) was an excellent skit demonstrating such ability. Shasha, a white Angora cat, sneaked out of a hotel room to wander down the streets of Washington, DC to discover Ann, a tabby cat in the White House yard. The cats ran from each other at first. Gradually they made frolic and a lasting friendship. They separated after planning to meet again and play together when Ann traveled to Russia. This student became so involved and received such warmth from the students, she decided to write the story and illustrate it. After she completed it, the pages were laminated and assembled in book form. She wrote a letter to the President of the United States and Premier of Russia reinforcing her concept of peace. She

enclosed a copy of her creative dramatics story in written form. She received 580 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G).

Linn (1968) indicated that language is an instrument of logical reasoning whereby student participants draw closely together to experience an idea. The stories, The Return of the Leftor and Traveling into the Future, both acquired 585 points respectively (see Appendix G) and reinforced this theory. Two boys interacted, exchanged ideas and created two space related stories. The young audience enjoyed traveling through space and experiencing creative happenings similar to the science fiction stories children see on television.

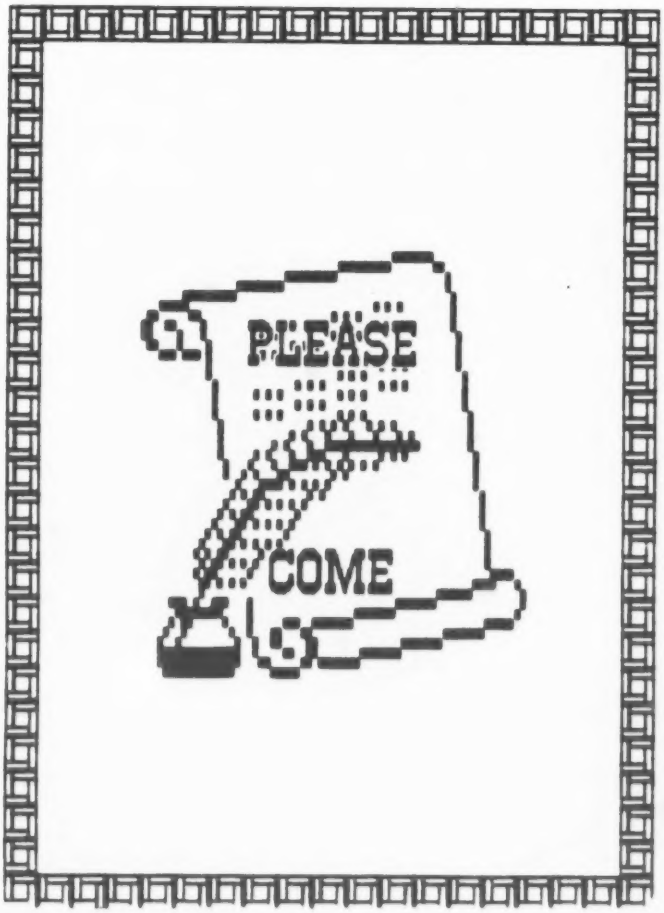
Ashley Comes to Life ranked as the highest performance at 590 points on the Horst Creative Dramatics Scale (see Appendix G). In the writer's opinion, it was the most creative story performed. One girl had the group help her create her doll coming to life and being her very special playmate. This skit described the definition accepted by the Children's Theatre Association of America (1977) which indicated that creative dramatics is an improvisational nonexhibitional process-centered form of dramatics in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experience. This skit did allow her personality to unfold and blossom in a natural way. The students that she chose to help her were as involved with the creative dramatics performance.

This student was self motivated to further her endeavor.

She took her favorite doll as a prop, borrowed her brother's camera and set up each scene that her doll experienced. She wrote a script and used her pictures to complete a story, sharing her relationship with her doll that came to life. She laminated each page and assembled it in the proper book form. She had accomplished preserving her creative dramatics effort in book form to share with her relatives (See Appendix L). She had become a producer, writer and stage manager all in one and was extremely adept for her young years. Her parents shared with the writer that she had become involved in constructing hand puppets, stage sets and dialogue for her relatives following this creative dramatics experience through the gifted program.

APPENDIX I

INVITATION TO PARENTS



YOU ARE
INVITED TO OUR
CREATIVE
DRAMATICS
FESTIVAL
ON TUESDAY,
JUNE 10, 1987
AT 1:00 P.M.

NEWSPAPER PUBLICITY

Newspaper publicity: Newseagle, August 5, 1987, page 12.

DEVELOPING IMAGINATION — A creative dramatics festival was held Friday at the Pine Beach Lake Wallenpaupack home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Horst where children presented a program for parents and friends. The children developed and dramatized their own story or selected scene, playing the role of a descriptive person, an animal or object. The situation 'allowed' the children to explore through creative dramatics. Swimming and refreshments followed. Pictured kneeling, in front, from left, are Jessica Gable and Timmy Gable. Standing, from left, Sara Evans, Jason Horst, Kari Collins, Mrs. Alice Horst and Jennifer Vogt.

(News Eagle photo)

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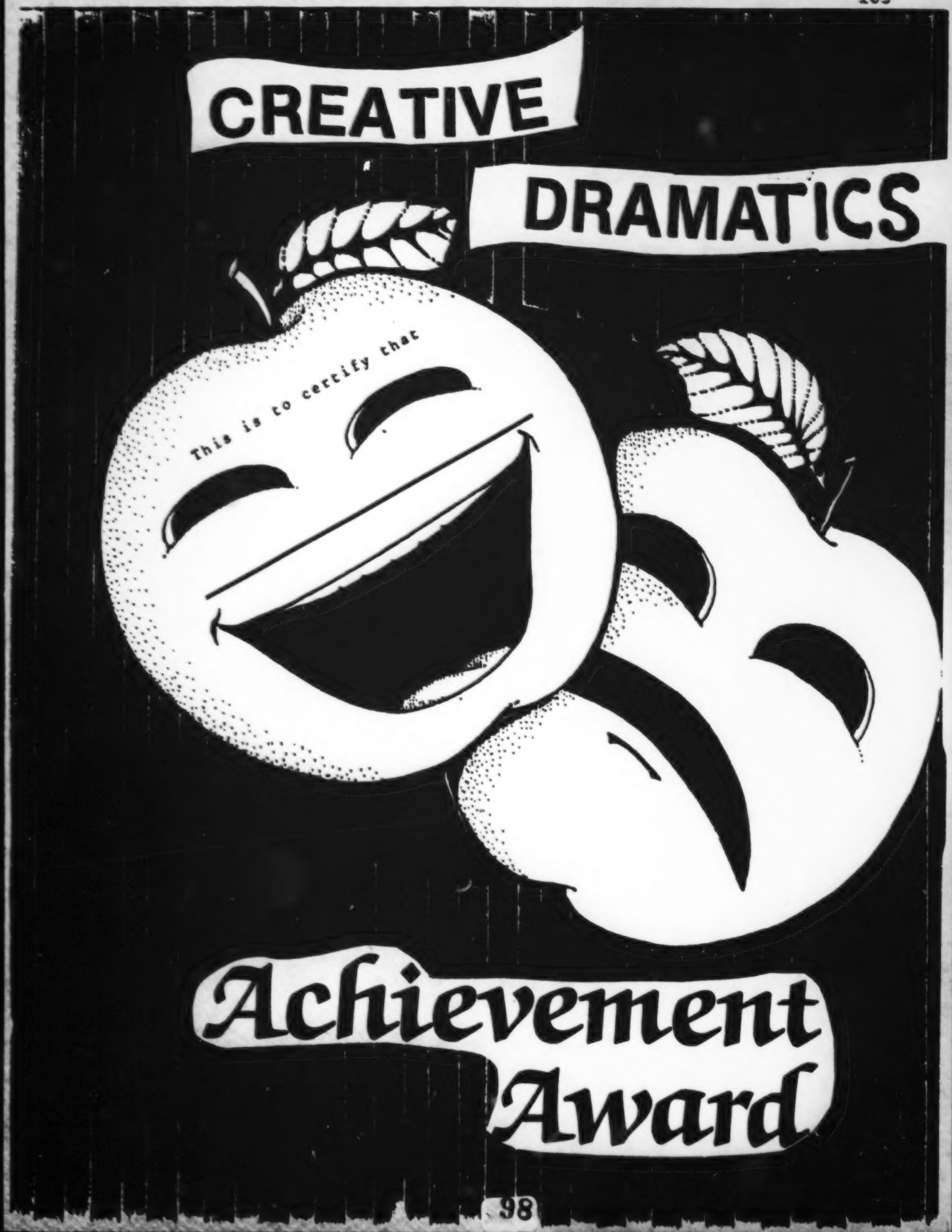

CREATIVE
DRAMATICS
This is to certify that
Achievement
Award

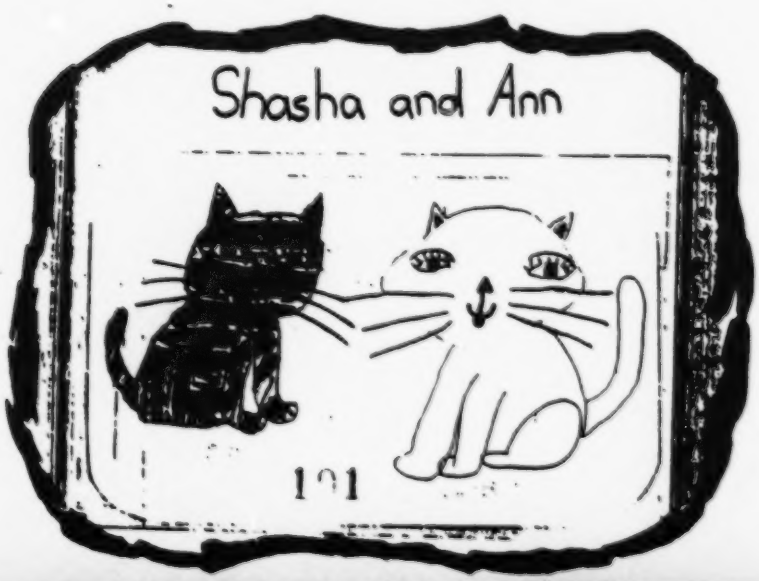
APPENDIX L

Student Playbills and/or Creative Dramatics Stories

Return of
Leftor
ESKIMOS
Birdy

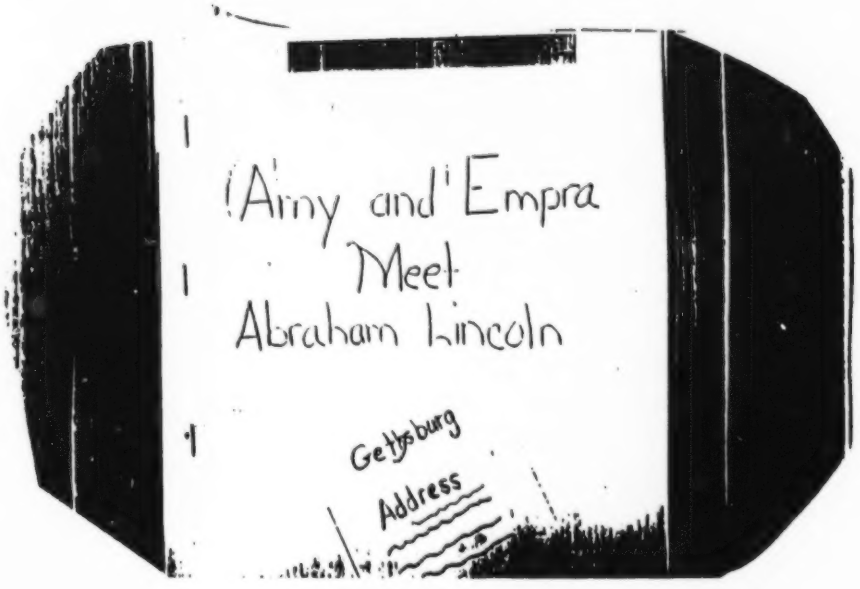
My Dog, Tippy

Tippy was a nice little brown and white dog.
He played with me - We liked to jog.
He liked to shake my hand.
He ate dog food - that was canned.
I loved him so! One day he died!
And I don't know why! Age 7



John Learns
Karate

1776


(Army and Empra
Meet
Abraham Lincoln
Gettysburg
Address